Great Lakes and Mississippi River Interbasin Study – Brandon Road

Environmental Impact Statement
Scoping Summary Report

May 2015

US Army Corps of Engineers ®

CONTENTS

FIGURES

ACRONYMS

ANS	aquatic nuisance species
CAWS	Chicago Area Waterway System
DEIS	Draft Environmental Impact Statement
ESC	Executive Steering Committee
GLMRIS	Great Lakes and Mississippi River Interbasin Study
MAP-21	Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NOI	Notice of Intent
T&E	Threatened and Endangered
UDPR	Upper Des Plaines River
USACE	United States Army Corps of Engineers
WRRDA	Water Resources Reform and Development Act

1 INTRODUCTION

The Great Lakes and Mississippi River Interbasin Study (GLMRIS) was authorized in Section 3061(d) of WRDA 2007, Public Law 110-114 as follows:

> FEASIBILITY STUDY – The Secretary, in consultation with appropriate Federal, State, local and nongovernmental entities, shall conduct, at Federal expense, a feasibility study of the range of options and technologies available to prevent the spread of aquatic nuisance species between the Great Lakes and Mississippi River Basins through the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal and other aquatic pathways.

In January 2014, USACE released a report that provided a range of options that could be implemented to prevent the transfer through the CAWS of aquatic nuisance species (ANS) between the Mississippi River (MR) and the Great Lakes (GL) basins. Given the potential urgency associated with the threat of ANS – with particular attention to Asian carp species – and in response to a growing consensus among Congressional, nongovernmental, and public stakeholders, the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works) directed the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to proceed with a formal evaluation of potential aquatic nuisance species (ANS) control technologies as a next step in GLMRIS.

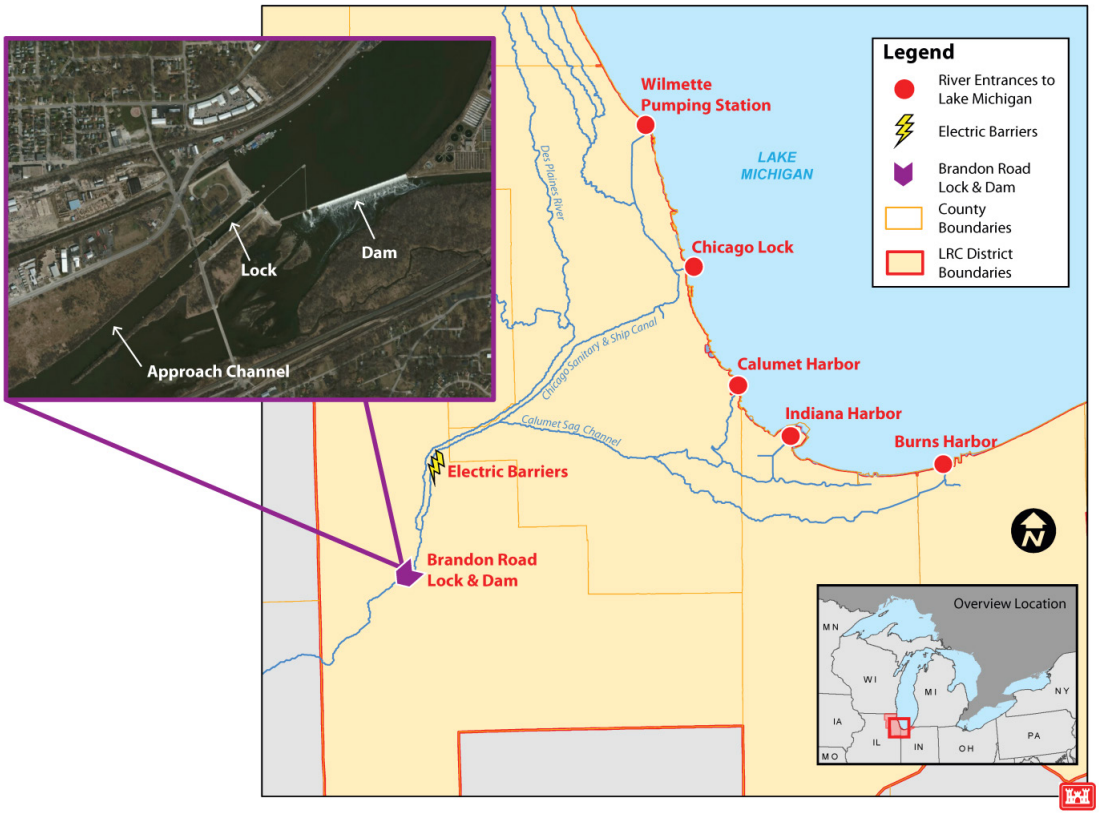

Figure 1 GLRMIS Study Area

GLMRIS – Brandon Road will assess the viability of establishing a single point to control the upstream transfer of aquatic nuisance species from the MR Basin into the GL Basin near the Brandon Road Lock and Dam in Joliet, Illinois. The information gathered from this evaluation could be used to inform future GLMRIS actions, as well.

GLMRIS – Brandon Road builds on the foundation of the GLMRIS Report. The location and physical orientation of the Brandon Road Lock and Dam site provides advantages for further evaluation of ANS controls:

a. The Brandon Road site is located south (downstream) of the confluence of the Des Plaines River and the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal (CSSC). Previous investigations under the Efficacy Study have indicated that a potential hydrologic bypass can occur during periods of high precipitation from the Des Plaines River to the CSSC. A one-way control point at the Brandon Road site would minimize the likelihood of bypass of MR Basin ANS into the GL Basin during flood events;

b. The physical configuration of the Brandon Road Dam prevents the upstream transfer of MR ANS. There is a minimum 25-foot difference in water elevation from the downstream side of the dam to the upstream side of the dam, which effectively limits upstream transfer. At this location, operation of the lock currently provides the only known aquatic pathway that allows transfer of MR ANS to the GL;

c. The approach channel and lock provide a unique opportunity to control ANS transfer in a relatively small section of the river that is not free flowing. These conditions provide the opportunity to optimize the operational characteristics of potential ANS controls, maximize the efficiency of applied technologies, and minimize the associated costs for implementation and operation. The physical lock structure also provides an additional control in the event of a temporary failure or malfunction of any potential control technologies employed downstream;

d. Establishing a control point at Brandon Road for MR species does not adversely impact flood risk or water quality of the CAWS and provides for additional defense in depth for a particular species of concern, Asian carp, when combined with the current Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal Aquatic Nuisance Species Dispersal Barriers (CSSC Barriers); and

e. Three of six structural alternatives presented in the GLMRIS Report (Alts. #4, #7, #8) utilize the Brandon Road site as a control point for ANS transfer.

The GLMRIS Team performed a similar assessment for GL ANS and determined that a single control point to address the downstream transfer of Great Lakes ANS would result in significant flood risk impacts and removed this option from further consideration. As described in the GLMRIS Report, in order to minimize adverse impacts to existing uses and users of the CAWS, multiple control points would need to be established to control GL ANS from transferring into the MR Basin. As a result of these complexities, the Brandon Road Lock and Dam location was selected for further evaluation.

A Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare a Draft Environmental Impacts Statement (DEIS) to evaluate the impacts of a range of potential structural and nonstructural ANS controls near Brandon Road Lock and Dam was initially published in the Federal Register on November 20, 2014 (Attachment 1) and a subsequent notice was posted on January 05, 2015 (Attachment 2). The NOIs invited interested members of the public to provide comments on the scope of the DEIS, including identification of issues and alternatives (ANS control technologies) that should be considered in the EIS analysis. The comment period lasted until January 31, 2015.

This report presents a summary of the comments that were received during the scoping period. USACE will use this report and the individual comments as part of a process to determine the scope of the analysis in the DEIS. All comments, regardless of how they were submitted, will receive equal consideration in the development of the DEIS.

Transcripts from public meetings and copies of all written scoping comments submitted either by mail, via an online comment form, or in person at the public meetings are available on the GLMRIS – Brandon Road Web site (http://glmris.anl.gov/brandon-rd/).

2 THE SCOPING PROCESS

2.1 PUBLIC OUTREACH

The USACE issued a press release on November 18, 2014, that discussed the Corps' plan to proceed with a formal evaluation of potential ANS control technologies in the vicinity of Brandon Road Lock and Dam (Attachment 3). It announced the public scoping comment period (November 20, 2014 to January 17, 2015); the location and dates of public meetings; and methods by which comments could be submitted.

On November 20, 2014, the USACE published a NOI in the Federal Register to prepare a DEIS on the proposed GLMRIS - Brandon Road evaluation, initiate the public scoping period, and host public scoping meetings (Attachment 1).

A letter dated December 9, 2014, was mailed or sent electronically by the USACE Chicago District to over 230 stakeholders (including government agencies; members of the Asian Carp Regional Coordinating Committee; members of Congress; federal and state government agencies; environmental organizations; organizations affiliated with the navigation industry) and nearly 90 tribes (Attachment 4). It explained the current activities regarding GLMRIS and invited comments on the proposed Brandon Road project.

A subsequent NOI on January 5, 2015 added a public meeting in New Orleans and extended the comment period to January 31, 2015 (Attachment 2). The USACE issued a second press release announcing the extension to the public comment period and the third public meeting in New Orleans (Attachment 5).

Prior to the public meetings, USACE placed newspaper advertisements announcing the date, time and locations of the public meetings and also alerted the public of the public comment period in newspaper's of general circulation. A sample newspaper advertisement is found in Attachment 6.

As part of the scoping process the stakeholders, tribes, and the public were invited to submit scoping comments on the GLMRIS - Brandon Road feasibility evaluation. The following methods were available for submitting comments:

- GLMRIS project Web site: glmris.anl.gov
- Mail
- Hand delivery to the Chicago District, USACE office
- In person or by Webinar at the public meetings, either by testifying or submitting written comments

Public scoping meetings were held at the following locations:

Lemont, IL	Dec. 6, 2014	Argonne National Laboratory, Bldg 240
Chicago, IL	Dec 9, 2014	Gleacher Center
New Orleans, LA	Jan. 8, 2015	USACE, New Orleans District Office

Transcripts of the scoping meetings and individual comment submittals are posted on the GLMRIS Web site on Brandon Road page.

As part of its continuing effort to inform the public about GLMRIS-related activities, the USACE maintains a public Web site (glmris.anl.gov) that provides background information about the project, public involvement opportunities, and project-related reports, as well as specific information on Brandon Road Lock and Dam evaluation. The Web site also provides people with an opportunity to subscribe to a e-mail distribution list, which provides project information and newscast updates – 801 e-mail addresses are currently subscribed. The Web site address was provided to the public through public meetings, press releases, and scoping letters. The public can also follow the project on Facebook and Twitter, with, at the time of this report, GLMRIS has 693 followers on Twitter and there are 620 people who like GMLRIS on Facebook.

2.2 SCOPING METRICS

About 65 individuals, organizations, and state and local government agencies provided scoping comments on GLMRIS – Brandon Road. A few individuals submitted more than one document or used more than one method to submit comments; some documents were signed by multiple people. Comments were received from 15 states and the Province of Ontario. Nearly 60 percent of the commenters were from Illinois and Michigan; 13 percent were from Louisiana.

The following Federal, State, Tribal, and Local governments provided individual scoping comments or signed on to a comment letter:

- Illinois Department of Natural Resources
- Illinois Historic Preservation Agency
- Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians
- Metropolitan Water District of Greater Chicago
- Michigan Attorney General
- Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
- Michigan Department of Natural Resources
- Michigan Department of Environmental Quality
- Ohio Department of Natural Resources

- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, DC Office
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Minnesota Office

The following organizations provided responses but had no comments: Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Duluth Coast Guard, Seminole Tribe of Florida Historic Preservation Office, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Northern Indiana.

About 20 percent of the comment letters were either submitted by non-governmental organizations or signed by members of non-governmental organizations; about 22 percent were affiliated with the navigation industry. Individuals not affiliated with an organization accounted for about 12 percent of the comment submittals.

Public Meetings: Public meetings were held in Lemont, Illinois; Chicago, Illinois; and New Orleans, Louisiana. Displays presented information about GLMRIS and the Brandon Road feasibility evaluation. People could also participate in the meetings via the Webinar. Comment forms were available for submitting written comments and documents. Also available were a Frequently Asked Questions handout with information about the GLMRIS study in general and the Brandon Road site, and a summary of the GLMRIS report released January 2014.

USACE staffed each meeting with agency representatives who made presentations about GLMRIS. After the presentation, the public was invited to provide comments and ask questions. Court reporters were present at each meeting to record the proceedings.

About 45 people attended the GLMRIS public scoping meetings, either in person or by Webinar. They were attended by people affiliated with environmental organizations, members of the navigation industry, government organizations, and other interested parties. People representing U.S. Senator Vitter and U.S. Congressman Steve Scalise (both from Louisiana) attended the meeting in New Orleans.

Twelve people spoke at the meetings; 5 via Webinar. Two commenters attended both the Chicago and New Orleans meetings. All but one of the commenters was affiliated with an organization. Seventy-five percent of the commenters were affiliated with the navigation industry in some way; most of them spoke at the New Orleans meeting.

Web site and Other Comment Submittals: The GLMRIS Brandon Road scoping process received 70 comments from individuals, environmental organizations, business and industry, state agencies, and Native American Tribes. Twenty-six were submitted using the GLMRIS project Web site and 12 were mailed; 14 submittals came from the public meetings.

3 SUMMARY OF SCOPING COMMENTS

Commenters nearly universally agreed that steps must be taken to control the spread of Asian carp and other aquatic nuisance species, acknowledging that the problem was a shared responsibility among federal, state, and regional government agencies, and the public. Commenters mentioned outreach education and outreach activities, including a brochure informing commercial and recreational boaters about Asian carp; cooperative efforts such as the Great Lakes Regions' Aquatic Invasive Species Mutual Aid Agreement and the Navigation and Ecosystem Sustainability Program; assisting with studies on the effectiveness of the CSSC Barriers; and working with the USACE and the Coast Guard to safeguard navigation crews during and after crossing the CSSC Barriers.

In general, commenters supported the decision to proceed with a study in the vicinity of the Brandon Road Lock and Dam site, as part of the continuing effort to evaluate ANS control strategies. They felt it provided a mechanism for addressing the risk of ANS transfer to the Great Lakes, while still maintaining the navigational integrity of the Chicago Area Waterway System (CAWS). Information gained from the Brandon Road study could be used to inform ANS control efforts in other areas.

However, while many commenters considered this to be an important short-term measure, they argued that the Brandon Road project should not be treated as a permanent solution and stressed that plans should continue towards developing a long-term comprehensive plan to stop ANS movement in both directions through the CAWS.

Public Participation: Commenters from the navigation industry requested additional public scoping meetings throughout the inland waterways system, specifically in St. Louis, New Orleans, and Houston. They made the point that Brandon Lock is part of a national waterway system and that most of the traffic that moves into the CAWS originates in the Gulf Coast. As a result, the USACE conducted an additional meeting in New Orleans.

Continued Stakeholder Involvement: Commenters discussed the need for continued stakeholder involvement in the GLMRIS process and asked that USACE incorporate all relevant research from government agencies, academia and industry; establish criteria for considering technologies; and establish clear deadlines for submitting material for review. Commenters noted that USACE should also re-establish the Executive Steering Committee and continue to work with it and the Asian Carp Regional Coordinating Committee to assure that research and technical support from other entities are effectively incorporated in the GLMRIS study.

One commenter asked that the Inland Waterways Users Board be updated on any proposed structures that could impact their vetting process for prioritizing a list of construction and/or rehabilitation projects.

Project Definition: Some commenters (mainly from the navigation industry) wanted more detailed information about the proposed actions at Brandon Road. They stated that it was difficult to provide detailed comments without a clearer understanding of the true scope of the project.

Congressional Direction: Some commenters asked for a clearer explanation of the USACE's charge and legal authority for proceeding with an Environmental Impact Statement to evaluate ANS control technologies at Brandon Road. Some questioned the decision, particularly since the U.S. Congress had directed the USACE to identify and pursue alternatives to prevent two-way movement of ANS. Some commenters felt no further action should be taken until Congress provides more specific direction.

Commenters argued that the Water Resource Reform and Development Act of 2014 (WRRDA 2014) provided a method to evaluate and prioritize existing and future projects. Since Brandon Road Lock, as a navigation structure, falls under the Act, construction activities should be based on WRRDA 2014 criteria. They also felt the decision to proceed with the Brandon Road project was not in keeping with Section 3061(d) of the Water Resources Development Act of 2007, since it does not address ANS control *between* the Mississippi and Great Lakes basins.

Commenters also cited Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) as evidence that further Congressional direction is needed. According to commenters, the Brandon Road project did not meet MAP-21 requirements to proceed directly to project preconstruction engineering and design (PED), since the proposed Brandon Road project was not one of the GLMRIS Alternatives.

Funding: A few commenters had questions about funding sources for the Brandon Road project. One asked if there were potential federal co-sponsors for the project; another asked if the project could access funds from the Inland Waterways Trust Fund. One organization urged the USACE to include funding for the Brandon Road evaluation in its base budget, but also suggested the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative as a potential source of funding.

Challenges to ANS Threat: One commenter stated that Asian carp are best adapted to warmer water, implying they would not become established in the Great Lakes. The yearly estimated value of the Lake Michigan fishery is less, than the cost of the most effective GLMRIS alternative ($18 billion).

Alternatives/ Control Technologies: In general, commenters thought control technologies should be: effective at reducing the risk of undesirable ANS movement; cost and time efficient to build; efficient to operate; and environmentally sound.

Nonstructural Controls: Many commenters advocated near-term measures that could be implemented before the USACE completed its Brandon Road evaluation, including the nonstructural controls described in Alternatives 1 (*Sustained Activities*) and 2 (*Nonstructural Control Technologies*) of the GLMRIS report. They felt that these efforts should be included in the overall ANS control strategy. A few maintained that permanent physical separation should be the ultimate goal, although they supported the short-term efforts at Brandon Road.

Members of the navigation industry wanted the USACE to focus on nonstructural controls described in Alternative II of the GLMRIS Report. They felt this approach could target various ANS species in a cost effective manner and could be implemented in the short term.

Environmental organizations stressed the importance of using deterrents that would minimize the ecological impacts to the surrounding area. To that end, they recommended using non-lethal deterrents instead of biocides and other poisons that could cause harm downstream. They recommended continuing the study of control technologies such as carbon dioxide and hydro-cannons.

Commenters offered the following criteria for evaluating treatment options:

Suitable for large-scale or recirculating treatments;

Rapid lethality;

Lethal to a full range of species and life stages (candidate treatments include: 43°C water; chlorine; ozone; vitamin K; sodium thiosulfate, UV light; and sodium chloride)

Impacts to vessels and the lock structure;

Human and environmental safety;

Ease of detoxification;

Availability and cost; and

Regulatory requirements.

Other suggestions for nonstructural controls included using underwater cameras to monitor the presence of Asian carp within the lock; use of chemical and biological controls; restoring predators in Lake Michigan that would eat Asian carp and other invasive species; and identifying market opportunities for Asian carp.

Adaptive Management: One commenter suggested using adaptive management practices to support the GLMRIS – Brandon Road project. This approach would provide a systematic method of continuously assessing the effectiveness of the control technologies and modifying them as needed.

Lock / Facility Design: Some commenters spoke in favor of an engineered channel that would facilitate the deployment and testing of control technologies. Some expressed reservations about the flushing lock concept and its ability to control ANS movement. One commenter suggested a lock system in Europe that reuses the lock water. Using this method, the water could be treated before it is pumped back into the lock. Another proposed a lock design that included an electric barrier within the lock, real-time monitoring, active flushing to move invasive species out the lock, and possible dam modifications to prevent fish from passing through the barrier.

Commenters affiliated with the navigation industry wanted changes to the lock facility to include a 1200-foot lock to accommodate modern tows.

One commenter suggested installing structures that would allow for the safe passage of the American eel through the lock and dam.

Electric Barriers: One commenter provided input on electrical options that could be used to control and guide fish at Brandon Road or other locations by: 1) applying sweeping electric field that could move fish out of an area, such as a lock chamber; 2) applying an electric current to the intake pipes on a lock that would kill fish; and 3) using a fish trap to selectively move fish around an electric barrier.

One commenter asked if the DEIS would explore anode configurations that differed from those in the electric barriers that are currently in place upstream; the goal being to develop a design that posed fewer human hazards.

Lock Closure: Two commenters wanted to know if the EIS would include an analysis of lock closure.

3.1 COMMENTS RELATED TO ALTERNATIVE IMPACTS

Ecologic Impacts: Commenters wanted the DEIS to take into account the important ecological value of this segment of the Des Plaines River. They recommended using non-lethal deterrents and barriers over biocides and other poisons that could cause collateral damage. The DEIS should include an assessment of ANS-prevention effectiveness and possible negative ecological impacts for each proposed control technology.

Native Species: Commenters pointed out that stopping the movement of ANS into the CAWS would also prevent the movement of native species. They discussed the potential negative impacts on the ability of native aquatic species to traverse through the Brandon Road Lock and Dam to the Upper Des Plaines River (UDPR) once control technologies are in place. This migration has contributed to the ecological recovery of the UDPR. Native mussels were specifically mentioned since their reproductive cycle depends on specific host fishes.

The EIS should investigate the potential effects on gene flow for state-listed fish and mussels, as well as ecologically and economically important aquatic species. One commenter pointed out that construction of the Brandon Road project may result in fish and mussel populations becoming geographically separated (disjunct) in the CAWS and Illinois River Basin, resulting in restricted gene flow and decreased genetic variability.

Threatened and Endangered (T&E) Species: One agency noted that there are many state-listed and species proposed for listing in the upper Illinois River, lower Kankakee River, and the CAWS whose successful recovery and range expansion could be negatively impacted by the GLMRIS Brandon Road project. Possible range expansion of some species upstream into the CAWS would be eliminated if passage through the Brandon Road site was prevented. The DEIS should discuss the impacts of the project on recovery of T&E species in their historic ranges in Illinois, including an estimate of the number of individuals that would be lost due to mortality at the Brandon Road facility. Alternatives and mitigation measures should be chosen that address these concerns.

According to the another agency, control technologies that result in changes in water volume or the natural flow of water in the Des Plaines River and its floodplains could impact the federally

endangered Hines emerald dragonfly. The USACE should also consider impacts to federally listed species that occur downstream in the Illinois River and its floodplains, including the sheepnose and scaleshell mussels, decurrent false aster, and eastern prairie fringed orchid.

Water Quality and Quantity: Commenters asked the USACE to consider the impacts of control technologies on water quality, particularly those that involved the use of pesticides, herbicides, and piscicides. One commenter was concerned about potential impacts to listed species from alternatives that include water withdrawal or hydrologic separation

Climate Change: One commenter wanted the impact analysis to take into account the effects climate change will have on migration and range shifts of aquatic species. Alternative and mitigation measures should be chosen to address these concerns.

Safety Impacts: The commenter wanted the DEIS to explore the risks that various control technologies posed to workers during construction and to staff during project operation. They gave the example of short- and long-term exposures to CO_2 infused zones.

Risks to Navigation Crews: Members of the navigation industry had serious concerns for the safety of their crews during locking operations, due to the close proximity of the proposed electric barrier at Brandon Road facility.

They stressed that there were already safety hazards to the crew during locking operations, including the danger of falling overboard. This would be even more perilous if the waters were electrified. Commenters noted that the existing barriers near Romeoville, Illinois, are the only place in the United States where the Coast Guard will not conduct rescue operations due to safety concerns for their personnel.

Commenters urged the USACE to work with industry and the Coast Guard to identify all safety and logistical concerns related to installing another electric barrier in an engineered channel near Brandon Lock, and to resolve conflicting requirements. For example, deck hands are required to be on the front of tows before and during lockage to provide information to the captain for safety reasons. However, requirements under the Coast Guard Regulation Navigation Area call for crew members to be inside the vessel before, during, and after crossing the CSSC Barriers.

Navigation and Economic Impacts: Commenters asked the USACE to fully evaluate the impacts of the Brandon Road project on navigation and the towing industry, during both construction and maintenance activities. Potential impacts associated with ANS controls could include congestion, delay, and operational or load restrictions. They stated that any barriers to the safe and efficient movement of goods would negatively impact the navigation industry and the economy.

The DEIS should analyze the impacts from increased truck and rail traffic if conditions at the Brandon Road site interfere with waterborne transport, including costs to maintain the roadways; carbon footprint; fuel consumption; air emissions; noise pollution; and number of injuries and fatalities.

Commenters also noted that manufacturers could experience increased costs and/or reduced transportation and operational efficiencies. Negative impacts to navigation on the CAWS could produce disincentives for business and commercial growth in the Great Lakes region.

The USACE should consider how expanded capacity of the Panama Canal locks (and a potential increase in demand for agricultural products) could affect waterborne commerce in Illinois.

Recreation Impacts: Commenters noted that additional control technologies at the Brandon Road site (both structural and nonstructural) have the potential to negatively impact human and small water craft recreation. They wanted the USACE to prioritize control technologies that were consistent with the goal of the Clean Water Act – swimmable, fishable waters.

Regulatory Requirements: One commenter noted that the *Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement* and the *Great Lakes – St. Lawrence River Basin Sustainable Water Resources Compact and Agreement* both require notice and exchange of information between the U.S. and Canada regarding actions that may impact water quality or quantity in the Great Lakes. The commenter cautioned that this could create hurdles for implementing CAWS-related ANS controls and urged the USACE to consider these agreements when evaluating the GLMRIS Brandon Road proposal.

Cultural Resource Impacts: One commenter thanked the USACE for initiating Section 106 consultation and reminded the USACE that the Brandon Road Lock and Dam Historic District is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Tribal Considerations: The USACE should consider commercial and subsistence fishing rights of federally recognized tribes in the Great Lakes when analyzing the impacts of potential alternatives and control technologies.

Cumulative Impacts:

Hydropower: Two commenters wanted the EIS to study the cumulative impacts of using the Brandon Road site for both hydropower operation and the GLMRIS project. Illinois Department of Natural Resources has been reviewing a proposed hydropower facility by Northern Illinois Hydropower since 2009 (FERC # 12717).

Brandon Road Lock and Dam Maintenance: Several commenters, mainly from the navigation industry, referred to the Brandon Road Lock and Dam fact sheet prepared by the Rock Island District Corps of Engineers. It provided information on an estimated $50 million in repairs and rehabilitation that were needed at the facility. Commenters were particularly concerned that the system's 600-foot lock requires modern 1200-foot tows to split and pass through the lock in two operations, which increases lockage time and exposes deckhand to increased accident risks.

Some commenters felt that the USACE should not fund unproven technologies before the maintenance issues were addressed. Others wanted the USACE to consider lock upgrades in conjunction with the proposed ANS control technologies. They recommended that the DEIS evaluate building a modern 1200-foot lock at Brandon Road.

Commenters not providing comments: The Indiana Fish and Wildlife Service and the Duluth Coast Guard contacted the USACE to let them know they would not be providing comments on the Brandon Road project. The Seminole Tribe of Florida Historic Preservation Office and the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma said they would not provide comments since the project was outside their area of historic interest.

4 INTERAGENCY COOPERATION AND GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION

4.1 INTERAGENCY COOPERATION

The size, scope, and complexity of GLMRIS demonstrated a need for access to a wider and deeper level of expertise in a wide range of scientific fields. To assist in this endeavor, an Executive Steering Committee (ESC) was created that includes a number of Federal and State agencies as well as some regional committees. This will enable GLMRIS to take advantage of the various centers of expertise of these organization. Current members of the ESC include:

- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers,
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency,
- U.S. Geological Survey,
- U.S. Department of Agriculture,
- U.S. Coast Guard,
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service,
- U.S. Department of Transportation,
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration,
- International Joint Commission,
- Great Lakes Fisheries Commission,
- States of Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin,
- City of Chicago,

- The Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago,
- Great Lakes & St. Lawrence Cities Initiative,
- Illinois International Port District, and
- Upper Mississippi River Basin Association.

5 FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES FOR PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Scoping is the first phase of public involvement under the NEPA process. The public will have additional opportunities to be involved in the preparation of the GLMRIS EIS. The next formal phase of the public involvement will be the public review and comment on the Draft EIS. USACE anticipates releasing the draft EIS in late 2016 pending receipt of capability funding.

The public is encouraged to subscribe to receive newsletters and updates through the GLMRIS Web site. This e-mail service is intended to provide the public with quick, convenient access to important news and information. Subscribers receive periodic E-mails about the study, including public meeting notices, publication announcements for documents and important additions to the GLMRIS Web site and other news and events. The public can also join the GLMRIS conversation on Facebook or Twitter.

ATTACHMENT 1 November 20, 2014 Federal Register Notice

special government employees shall serve without compensation except that travel and per diem expenses associated with official Committee activities are reimbursable.

Additional information about the Committee is available on the Internet at: *http://www.arlingtoncemetery.mil/AboutUs/Advisory.aspx*

Brenda S. Bowen,

Army Federal Register Liaison Officer.

[FR Doc. 2014–27491 Filed 11–19–14; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3710–08–P

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Department of the Army; Corps of Engineers

Notice of Intent To Prepare a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), Initiate the Public Scoping Period and Host Public Scoping Meetings for the Great Lakes and Mississippi River Interbasin Study (''GLMRIS'')—Evaluation of Aquatic Nuisance Species Controls Near Brandon Road Lock and Dam

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

ACTION: Notice of intent.

SUMMARY: The Chicago District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) announces its intent to (1) prepare a Draft EIS, (2) accept public comments and (3) host public scoping meetings in Lemont, Illinois at Argonne National Laboratories and Chicago, Illinois for GLMRIS—Evaluation of Aquatic Nuisance Species Controls near Brandon Road Lock and Dam (GLMRIS—Brandon Road).

In collaboration with other Federal, State, and local agencies as well as non-governmental entities, USACE is evaluating structural and nonstructural options and technologies near the Brandon Road Lock and Dam site. This effort is an interim response to the GLMRIS authority. The purpose of the GLMRIS—Brandon Road evaluation is to consider a control point to reduce the risk of upstream transfer of ANS, from the Mississippi River (MR) Basin into the Great Lakes (GL) Basin through the Chicago Area Waterway System (CAWS), to the maximum extent possible. The GLMRIS—Brandon Road effort will seek to minimize adverse impacts to waterway users or resources.

DATES: The NEPA scoping period ends on January 16, 2015. The GLMRIS—Brandon Road NEPA Public Scoping meetings are scheduled for December 6, 2014 in Lemont, Illinois at Argonne National Laboratories, and December 9, 2014 in Chicago, Illinois. Please refer to the ''Scoping and Public Involvement'' section below for information regarding the public scoping meeting and for instructions on how to submit public comments.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For further information and/or questions about GLMRIS, please contact USACE, Chicago District, Project Manager, Mr. David Wethington, *by mail:* USACE, Chicago District, 231 S. LaSalle, Suite 1500, Chicago, Illinois 60604, or *by email: david.m.wethington@usace.army.mil.*

For media inquiries, please contact USACE, Chicago District, Public Affairs Officer, Ms. Lynne Whelan, *by mail:* USACE, Chicago District, 231 S. LaSalle, Suite 1500, Chicago, Illinois 60604, *by phone:* 312.846.5330 or *by email: lynne.e.whelan@usace.army.mil.*

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

1. *Background.* In January 2014, USACE released the GLMRIS Report, which evaluated the potential range of alternatives to control ANS transfer between the GL and MR basins via the CAWS. In GLMRIS, USACE has interpreted the term ''prevent'' to mean the reduction of risk to the maximum extent possible, because it may not be technologically feasible to achieve an absolute solution.

The GLMRIS Report identified eight alternatives, six of which were structural alternatives. Three structural alternatives established an ANS control point near Brandon Road Lock and Dam in Joliet, Illinois. The GLMRIS Report identified the Brandon Road control point as a single location that can address upstream transfer of MR ANS through the CAWS.

Based on evaluations presented in the GLMRIS Report and in response to stakeholder input, USACE has been directed by the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works) to proceed with a formal evaluation of potential ANS controls to be applied near the Brandon Road Lock and Dam, located near Joliet, Illinois. The GLMRIS—Brandon Road effort will evaluate the range of options or technologies available to prevent additional MR ANS transfer through the CAWS into the GL Basin.

This effort will assess the potential of various ANS controls to address the one-way, upstream transfer of ANS through the approach channel and/or lock chamber at Brandon Road Lock and Dam, and seek to minimize any adverse impacts to waterway users or resources.

The Brandon Road Lock and Dam Historic District includes the Brandon Road Lock and Dam and was retroactively listed on the National Register of Historic Places on March 11, 2004.

GLMRIS will be conducted in accordance with NEPA and with the *Economic and Environmental Principles and Guidelines for Water and Related Land Resource Implementation Studies,* Water Resources Council, March 10, 1983.

2. *Scoping and Public Involvement.* USACE will accept comments related to GLMRIS—Brandon Road until January 16, 2014.

All forms of comments received during the scoping period will be weighted equally. Using input obtained during the scoping period, USACE will refine the scope of GLMRIS to focus on significant issues, as well as eliminate issues that are not significant from further detailed study.

Comments may be submitted in the following ways:

- GLMRIS project Web site: Use the web comment function found at *http://glmris.anl.gov/.*
- NEPA Scoping Meeting: USACE is hosting scoping meetings and asks those who wish to make oral comments in person to register on the GLMRIS project Web site at *http://glmris.anl.gov/.* Each meeting's on-line registration to speak will be closed at 10 a.m. central time the day of the meeting. Those who do not register to speak via the GLMRIS Web site may register at the meeting. Those registering through the Web site may be given a preference over those that register to make an oral comment at the meeting. Each individual wishing to make oral comments shall be given three (3) minutes, and a stenographer will document oral comments;
- Mail: Mail written comments to GLMRIS—Brandon Road Scoping, 231 S. LaSalle, Suite 1500, Chicago, Illinois 60604. Comments must be postmarked by January 16, 2014; and
- Hand Delivery: Comments may be hand-delivered to the Chicago District, USACE office located at 231 S. LaSalle, Suite 1500, Chicago, Illinois 60604 between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Comments must be received by January 16, 2014.

The public meetings will begin with a brief presentation regarding the study followed by an oral comment period. During the meeting, USACE will also collect written comments.

The public meetings are scheduled for the following:

- 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Saturday, December 6, 2014, at Argonne National Laboratory's Theory and Computing Sciences Building, located at Theory and Computing Sciences Building, Building 240, Argonne National

Laboratory, 9700 S. Cass Avenue, Argonne, Illinois 60439 (directions available on the GLMRIS project Web site), and

• 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, December 9, 2014, at the Gleacher Center, located at 450 North Cityfront Plaza Drive, Chicago, Illinois 60611.

Please see the GLMRIS project Web site at *http://glmris.anl.gov/* for directions, more information regarding the meeting and if you wish to make an oral comment.

Comments received during the scoping period will be posted on the GLMRIS project Web site and will become part of the EIS.

If you require assistance under the Americans with Disabilities Act, please contact Ms. Lynne Whelan via email at *lynne.e.whelan@usace.army.mil* or phone at (312) 846–5330 at least seven (7) working days prior to the meeting to request arrangements.

3. *Significant Issues.* Issues associated with the proposed study are likely to include, but will not be limited to impacts of ANS on current waterway uses and resources; impacts of potential ANS controls on current waterway uses and resources; and statutory and legal responsibilities relative to the lakes and waterways. Examples of waterway uses and resources that may be impacted by ANS include significant natural resources such as ecosystems and threatened and endangered species, commercial and recreational fisheries, and current recreational uses of the lakes and waterways. Examples of current waterway uses that may be impacted by potential ANS controls are commercial and recreational navigation, flood risk management and water supply and quality.

4. *Availability of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.* Availability of the Draft EIS is contingent upon sufficient allocation of funding for the study. Draft EIS availability will be announced to the public in the **Federal Register** in compliance with 40 CFR 1506.9 and 1506.10.

5. *Authority.* This action is being undertaken pursuant to the Water Resources and Development Act of 2007, Section 3061, Pub. L. 110–114, 121 STAT. 1121, and the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), 42 U.S.C. 4321, et seq., as amended.

Dated: November 14, 2014.

Susanne J. Davis, P.E.,

Chief, Planning Branch, Chicago District, Corps of Engineers.

[FR Doc. 2014–27531 Filed 11–19–14; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3720–58–P

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

[Docket No. ED–2014–ICCD–0152]

Agency Information Collection Activities; Comment Request; Personal Authentication Service (PAS) for FSA ID

AGENCY: Federal Student Aid (FSA), Department of Education (ED).

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. chapter 3501 *et seq.*), ED is proposing a new information collection.

DATES: Interested persons are invited to submit comments on or before January 20, 2015.

ADDRESSES: Comments submitted in response to this notice should be submitted electronically through the Federal eRulemaking Portal at *http://www.regulations.gov* by selecting Docket ID number ED–2014–ICCD–0152 or via postal mail, commercial delivery, or hand delivery. If the regulations.gov site is not available to the public for any reason, ED will temporarily accept comments at *ICDocketMgr@ed.gov. Please note that comments submitted by fax or email and those submitted after the comment period will not be accepted; ED will ONLY accept comments during the comment period in this mailbox when the regulations.gov site is not available.* Written requests for information or comments submitted by postal mail or delivery should be addressed to the Director of the Information Collection Clearance Division, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue SW., LBJ, Mailstop L–OM–2–2E319, Room 2E103, Washington, DC 20202.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For specific questions related to collection activities, please contact Beth Grebeldinger, 202 377–4018.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Department of Education (ED), in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA) (44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A)), provides the general public and Federal agencies with an opportunity to comment on proposed, revised, and continuing collections of information. This helps the Department assess the impact of its information collection requirements and minimize the public's reporting burden. It also helps the public understand the Department's information collection requirements and provide the requested data in the desired format. ED is soliciting comments on the proposed information collection request (ICR) that is described below. The Department of Education is especially interested in public comment addressing the following issues: (1) Is this collection necessary to the proper functions of the Department; (2) will this information be processed and used in a timely manner; (3) is the estimate of burden accurate; (4) how might the Department enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (5) how might the Department minimize the burden of this collection on the respondents, including through the use of information technology. Please note that written comments received in response to this notice will be considered public records.

Title of Collection: Personal Authentication Service (PAS) for FSA ID.

OMB Control Number: 1845–NEW.

Type of Review: A new information collection.

Respondents/Affected Public: Individuals or Households.

Total Estimated Number of Annual Responses: 55,300,000.

Total Estimated Number of Annual Burden Hours: 7,370,000.

Abstract: Federal Student Aid (FSA) is replacing the current PIN system with the Personal Authentication Service (PAS) which will employ an FSA ID, a standard user name and password solution. In order to create an FSA ID to gain access to certain FSA systems (FAFSA on the Web, NSLDS, StudentLoans.gov, etc.) a user must register on-line for an FSA ID account. The FSA ID will allow the customer to have a single identity, even if there is a name change or change to other personally identifiable information. The information collected to create the FSA ID enables electronic authentication and authorization of users for FSA web-based applications and information and protects users from unauthorized access to user accounts on all protected FSA sites.

Dated: November 17, 2014.

Kate Mullan,

Acting Director, Information Collection Clearance Division, Privacy, Information and Records Management Services, Office of Management.

[FR Doc. 2014–27509 Filed 11–19–14; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4000–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Secretary of Energy Advisory Board; Meeting

AGENCY: Department of Energy.

ACTION: Notice of Open Meeting.

ATTACHMENT 2 January 5, 2015 Federal Register Notice

options for locations of parking structures, and acquisition of additional space at two existing, offsite leased locations. These alternatives will be further developed during preparation of the Draft EIS as a result of public and agency input and environmental analyses of the activities. The No Action Alternative (not undertaking the East Campus Integration Program) will also be analyzed in detail.

This notice of intent is required by 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 1508.22 and briefly describes the Proposed Action and possible alternatives and our proposed scoping process. The EIS will comply with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*), the Council on Environmental Quality regulations in 40 CFR parts 1500 through 1508, and DoD Instruction 4715.9 (Environmental Planning and Analysis).

Significant Issues: Environmental issues to be analyzed in the EIS will include potential impacts on air quality, noise, natural resources, water use, solid waste, hazardous materials and wastes, transportation, and cumulative impacts from increased burdens on the installation and neighboring community based on projected development.

Scoping Process: Public scoping is an early and open process for identifying and determining the scope of issues to be addressed in the EIS. Scoping begins with this notice, continues through the public comment period (see **DATES**), and ends when the DoD has completed the following actions:

—Invites the participation of Federal, State, and local agencies, any affected Indian tribes, and other interested persons;
—Determines the actions, alternatives, and impacts described in 40 CFR 1508.25;
—Identifies and eliminates from detailed study those issues that are not significant or that have been covered elsewhere;
—Indicates any related EISs or environmental assessments (EAs) that are not part of the EIS;
—Identifies other relevant environmental review and consultation requirements;
—Indicates the relationship between timing of the environmental review and other aspects of the proposed program;
—At its discretion, exercises the options provided in 40 CFR 1501.7(b).

Once the scoping process is complete, DoD will prepare a Draft EIS, and will publish a **Federal Register** notice announcing its public availability. If you want that notice to be sent to you, please contact the DoD Project Office point of contact identified in **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**. You will have an opportunity to review and comment on the Draft EIS. Additionally, the DoD anticipates holding a public meeting after publication of the Draft EIS in the vicinity of Fort Meade, Maryland, to present the Draft EIS and receive public comments regarding the document. The DoD will consider all comments received and then prepare the Final EIS. As with the Draft EIS, the DoD will announce the availability of the Final EIS and once again give you an opportunity for review and comment.

Dated: December 19, 2014.

Aaron Siegel,

Alternate OSD Federal Register Liaison Officer, Department of Defense.

[FR Doc. 2014–30343 Filed 1–2–15; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 5001–06–P

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Department of the Army, Corps of Engineers

Termination of Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities Foothills West Transportation Access Project

AGENCY: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Department of Defense.

ACTION: Withdrawal of notice of intent.

SUMMARY: The Alaska District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) is notifying interested parties that it has terminated the process to develop an Environmental Impact Statement and has withdrawn the application for a Department of the Army permit from the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) proposed Foothills West Transportation Access Project (Foothills Project). The original Notice of Intent to Prepare the EIS was published in the **Federal Register** on May 20, 2011 (76 FR 29218).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Questions regarding the termination of this EIS process should be addressed to: Ms. Melissa Riordan, Regulatory Division, telephone: (907) 474–2166, or mail: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, CEPOA–RD, 2175 University Avenue, Suite 201(E), Fairbanks, AK 99709–4927. Or email: *melissa.c.riordan@usace.army.mil.* Emailed questions, including attachments, should be provided in .doc, .docx, .pdf or .txt formats.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Alaska District published the original Notice of Intent to prepare the EIS for the proposed Foothills project in the **Federal Register** on Friday, May 20, 2011 (76 FR 29218). In the summer of 2013 the Alaska DOT&PF decided to re-evaluate plans for future EIS work, and in response the Corps suspended work and closed the EIS project file. After confirming on October 21, 2014 that the DOT&PF has no future plans to proceed with the project, the Corps officially determined that it is appropriate to terminate the EIS. The Corps' neutral role in the EIS process was to evaluate the environmental consequences of the proposed project under the authority of Section 10 of the River and Harbors Act of 1899 and Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. The preparation of the EIS was being conducted by a third-party contractor directed by the Corps, and funded by the applicant, which is typical of the Corps Regulatory EIS studies. Withdrawal of the permit application and termination of the EIS process will not prevent DOT&PF from reapplying at a later date.

Dated: November 3, 2014.

Approved by:

Michael Salyer,

North Branch Chief, Alaska District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

[FR Doc. 2014–30862 Filed 1–2–15; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3720–58–P

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Department of the Army, Corps of Engineers

Notice of Intent To Prepare a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), Initiate the Public Scoping Period and Host Public Scoping Meetings for the Great Lakes and Mississippi River Interbasin Study (''GLMRIS'')—Evaluation of Aquatic Nuisance Species Controls Near Brandon Road Lock and Dam: Extension of the Public Scoping Period and Announcement of an Additional Public Scoping Meeting Location

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

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: Reference the Notice of Intent published in the **Federal Register** on Thursday, November 20, 2014, volume 79, number 224, pages 69099–100 (79 FR 69099). This notice extends the public comment period and identifies an additional location for a GLMRIS public scoping meeting. For convenience, the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section of the November 20, 2014 notice has been reprinted with

new text announcing the extension of the public comment period and the additional location where USACE will host a scoping meeting.

DATES: The NEPA public scoping period ends on January 30, 2015. Please refer to the ''*Scoping and Public Involvement*'' section below for instructions on ways to submit public comments.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For further information and/or questions about GLMRIS, please contact USACE, Chicago District, Project Manager, Mr. David Wethington, *by mail:* USACE, Chicago District, 231 S. LaSalle, Suite 1500, Chicago, Illinois 60604, or *by email: david.m.wethington@usace.army.mil.*

For media inquiries, please contact USACE, Chicago District, Public Affairs Officer, Ms. Lynne Whelan, *by mail:* USACE, Chicago District, 231 S. LaSalle, Suite 1500, Chicago, Illinois 60604, *by phone:* 312.846.5330 or *by email: lynne.e.whelan@usace.army.mil.*

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

1. *Background.* In January 2014, USACE released the GLMRIS Report, which evaluated the potential range of alternatives to prevent ANS transfer between the GL and MR basins via the CAWS. In GLMRIS, USACE has interpreted the term ''prevent'' to mean the reduction of risk to the maximum extent possible, because it may not be technologically feasible to achieve an absolute solution.

The GLMRIS Report identified eight alternatives, six of which were structural alternatives. Three structural alternatives established an ANS control point near Brandon Road Lock and Dam in Joliet, Illinois. The GLMRIS Report identified the Brandon Road control point as a single location that can address upstream transfer of MR ANS through the CAWS.

Based on evaluations presented in the GLMRIS Report and in response to stakeholder input, USACE has been directed by the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works) to proceed with a formal evaluation of potential ANS controls to be applied near the Brandon Road Lock and Dam, located near Joliet, Illinois. The GLMRIS—Brandon Road effort will evaluate the range of options or technologies available to prevent MR ANS transfer through the CAWS into the GL Basin.

This effort will assess the potential of various ANS controls to address the one-way, upstream transfer of ANS through the approach channel and/or lock chamber at Brandon Road Lock and Dam, and seek to minimize any adverse impacts to waterway users or resources.

The Brandon Road Lock and Dam Historic District includes the Brandon Road Lock and Dam and was retroactively listed on the National Register of Historic Places on March 11, 2004.

GLMRIS will be conducted in accordance with NEPA and with the *Economic and Environmental Principles and Guidelines for Water and Related Land Resource Implementation Studies,* Water Resources Council, March 10, 1983.

2. *Scoping and Public Involvement.* USACE will accept comments related to GLMRIS—Brandon Road until January 30, 2015.

All forms of comments received during the scoping period will be weighted equally. Using input obtained during the scoping period, USACE will refine the scope of GLMRIS to focus on significant issues, as well as eliminate issues that are not significant from further detailed study.

Comments may be submitted in the following ways:

- GLMRIS project Web site: Use the web comment function found at *http://glmris.anl.gov/.*
- NEPA Scoping Meeting: USACE is hosting scoping meetings and asks those who wish to make oral comments in person to register on the GLMRIS project Web site at *http://glmris.anl.gov/* . Each meeting's on-line registration to speak will be closed at 10 a.m. central time the day of the meeting. Those who do not register to speak via the GLMRIS Web site may register at the meeting. Those registering through the Web site may be given a preference over those that register to make an oral comment at the meeting. Each individual wishing to make oral comments shall be given three (3) minutes, and a stenographer will document oral comments;
- Mail: Mail written comments to GLMRIS—Brandon Road Scoping, 231 S. LaSalle, Suite 1500, Chicago, Illinois 60604. Comments must be postmarked by January 30, 2015; and
- Hand Delivery: Comments may be hand-delivered to the Chicago District, USACE office located at 231 S. LaSalle, Suite 1500, Chicago, Illinois 60604 between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Comments must be received by January 30, 2015.

The public meetings will begin with a brief presentation regarding the study followed by an oral comment period. During the meeting, USACE will also collect written comments.

The additional public meeting is scheduled for 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Thursday, January 8, 2015, at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New Orleans District Office, Assembly Room A located at 7400 Leake Avenue, New Orleans, Louisiana. Please see the GLMRIS project Web site at *http://glmris.anl.gov/* for directions, more information regarding the meeting and if you wish to make an oral comment.

Comments received during the scoping period will be posted on the GLMRIS project Web site and will become part of the EIS.

If you require assistance under the Americans with Disabilities Act, please contact Ms. Lynne Whelan via email at *lynne.e.whelan@usace.army.mil* or phone at (312) 846–5330 at least seven (7) working days prior to the meeting to request arrangements.

3. *Significant Issues.* Issues associated with the proposed study are likely to include, but will not be limited to impacts of ANS on current waterway uses and resources; impacts of potential ANS controls on current waterway uses and resources; and statutory and legal responsibilities relative to the lakes and waterways. Examples of waterway uses and resources that may be impacted by ANS include significant natural resources such as ecosystems and threatened and endangered species, commercial and recreational fisheries, and current recreational uses of the lakes and waterways. Examples of current waterway uses that may be impacted by potential ANS controls are commercial and recreational navigation, flood risk management and water supply and quality.

4. *Availability of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.* Availability of the Draft EIS is contingent upon sufficient allocation of funding for the study. Draft EIS availability will be announced to the public in the **Federal Register** in compliance with 40 CFR 1506.9 and 1506.10.

5. *Authority.* This action is being undertaken pursuant to the Water Resources and Development Act of 2007, Section 3061, Pub. L. 110–114, 121 STAT. 1121, and the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), 42 U.S.C. 4321, *et seq.,* as amended.

Dated: December 29, 2014.

Susanne J. Davis,

Chief Planning Branch, Chicago District, Corps of Engineer.

[FR Doc. 2014–30859 Filed 1–2–15; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3720–58–P

ATTACHMENT 3 November 18, 2014 Press Release

NEWS RELEASE

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS **BUILDING STRONG®**

For Immediate Release:
November 18, 2014

Contact:
Lynne Whelan
(312) 846-5330
lynne.e.whelan@usace.army.mil

Corps announces plans to evaluate options at Brandon Road site as continuance of Great Lakes and Mississippi River Interbasin Study (GLMRIS), initiates public comment period

CHICAGO - As a next step in the Great Lakes and Mississippi River Interbasin Study (GLMRIS), the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works) has directed the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to proceed with a formal evaluation of potential aquatic nuisance species (ANS) control technologies. The focus of this analysis will be to reduce the risk of interbasin transfer of ANS to the maximum extent possible through the Chicago Area Waterway System (CAWS) in the vicinity of Brandon Road Lock and Dam.

The GLMRIS – Brandon Road effort will assess the viability of establishing a single point to control the one-way, upstream transfer of aquatic nuisance species from the Mississippi River basin into the Great Lakes basin near the Brandon Road Lock and Dam located in Joliet, Illinois. While the GLMRIS Report describes alternatives to prevent aquatic inter-basin transfer of ANS between the Great Lakes and Mississippi River watersheds, implementation of one-way ANS controls at Brandon Road is believed to be one of the most rapidly achievable structural options. Construction of one-way ANS controls at Brandon Road is expected to enhance protections for the Great Lakes basin while providing additional information and experience to inform two-way risk reduction solutions.

The Corps is scoping the development of a feasibility-level decision document to support an agency decision that could provide the basis for further possible action.

“The Brandon Road control point was identified in the GLMRIS analyses as the only single location that can address upstream transfer of Mississippi River species through all CAWS pathways,” said Dave Wethington, GLMRIS Project Manager for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. “That makes it an ideal location to evaluate potential control technologies.”

As part of the Corps announcement, a public comment period on the proposed GLMRIS-Brandon Road effort is beginning on November 17, 2014 and will run through January 17, 2015. Comments can be submitted by attending either of two public meetings that will be held in December in the Chicago region, through electronic submittal on the GLMRIS website, as well as via conventional mail.

Public meetings are being conducted to allow stakeholders to learn more about the upcoming effort and provide comment on the proposed activities involving the Brandon Road site. Public meetings are currently scheduled for Saturday, December 6, 2014 near Joliet, IL and on Tuesday, December 9, 2014 in Chicago, IL. Virtual attendance via the Web or call-in will be made available to maximize opportunities for participation. Additional information,

including advance registration to speak at one of the upcoming public meetings, can be found on the GLMRIS Website at: http://glmris.anl.gov.

The location of the Brandon Road Lock and Dam also serves as a valuable control point for species of particular public and stakeholder concern – the Silver and Bighead carp. Placement of technologies at- or downstream of- the Brandon Road lock structure enhances effectiveness of the controls by incorporating a mechanical fail-safe (lock closure) in the event of technology malfunction.

The Brandon Road site is located south (downstream) of the confluence of the Des Plaines River and the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal (CSSC). Previous investigations have indicated that a potential hydrologic bypass can occur during periods of high precipitation from the Des Plaines River to the CSSC. A one-way control point at the Brandon Road site would minimize the likelihood of bypass of Mississippi River ANS into the Great Lakes basin during flood events.

A project at the Brandon Road site is likely to minimize a number of previously identified adverse impacts to existing waterway uses and users, such as increased potential for flooding or degradation of water quality. These impacts contributed significantly to the lengthy timeframes and significant costs of the structural alternatives presented by the GLMRIS Report.

As strategic control of ANS is a shared responsibility among federal, state, regional and public stakeholders, the GLMRIS Team will continue to collaborate with agency and nongovernmental partners to support an integrated management approach to control Mississippi River ANS transfer into the Great Lakes. In order to achieve the maximum effectiveness of an ANS control program, nonstructural measures, including biological, educational, and management controls, must be incorporated into any technological solution. This management strategy requires the close coordination of a variety of local, state and federal agencies to implement actions commensurate with their resources and authorities, toward achieving a comprehensive ANS solution.

A teleconference for stakeholders to ask questions about the upcoming efforts at the Brandon Road site will be held Nov. 25, 2014, at 11 a.m. EST. Call Information: Dial-in: 1-888-621-9649 or 1-617-231-2734. Event ID: 417591.

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ATTACHMENT 4 Sample Scoping Letter

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
CHICAGO DISTRICT, U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
231 SOUTH LA SALLE STREET, SUITE 1500
CHICAGO IL 60604

Planning Branch
Environmental Formulation Section

Kenneth Westlake, Chief
Environmental Review Branch
U.S. EPA ME-19J
77 West Jackson
Chicago, IL 60604

Dear Mr. Westlake:

The Chicago District invites your comments on a proposed project near Brandon Road Lock and Dam. Consistent with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), we will evaluate the impacts of the potential project, proposed as part of the Great Lakes and Mississippi River Interbasin Study (GLMRIS). The project area is located within the Chicago Area Waterway System near Joliet, Illinois. The project area is supported by the Chicago District of the Great Lakes & Ohio River Division, and the Rock Island District of the Mississippi Valley Division, of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

In January 2014, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Chicago District (USACE), released the GLMRIS Report, which evaluated the potential range of alternatives to control Aquatic Nuisance Species (ANS) transfer between the Great Lakes and the Mississippi River basins via the Chicago Area Waterway System. The GLMRIS Report identified eight alternatives, six of which were structural alternatives. Three structural alternatives envisioned an ANS control point near Brandon Road Lock and Dam. The GLMRIS Report identified the Brandon Road control point as a single location that could address upstream transfer of ANS from the Mississippi River through the Chicago Area Waterway System.

Based on evaluations presented in the GLMRIS Report, in response to stakeholder input, and in collaboration with local, state, federal and non-governmental entities, the USACE intends to proceed with a formal evaluation of potential ANS controls near the Brandon Road Lock and Dam. The GLMRIS–Brandon Road effort will evaluate the range of options or technologies available to prevent the transfer of Mississippi River ANS transfer through the Chicago Area Waterway System into the Great Lakes Basin to the maximum extent possible. The GLMRIS–Brandon Road effort will seek to minimize adverse impacts to waterway users or resources, and will build upon the analyses completed for the GLMRIS Report. The GLMRIS Report and supporting documentation are available at http://www.glmris.anl.gov .

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
CHICAGO DISTRICT, U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
111 NORTH CANAL STREET
CHICAGO IL 60606-7206

Participation is encouraged and comments are welcome. Please comment by letter or email to reach our office not later than January 16, 2015, marking your reply to the attention GLMRIS–Brandon Road Scoping, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Chicago District, 231 S. LaSalle Street, Suite 1500, Chicago, Illinois 60604. Questions may be directed to Mr. Bullock at 312/846-5587, or at peter.y.bullock@usace.army.mil, Your assistance is appreciated.

Sincerely,

Susanne J. Davis, P. E.
Chief, Planning Branch

Enclosure

MFR: Consultation letter as required by NEPA.

BULLOCK.PETER.Y.1260096741
Digitally signed by BULLOCK.PETER.Y.1260096741
DN: c=US, o=U.S. Government, ou=DoD, ou=PKI, ou=USA, cn=BULLOCK.PETER.Y.1260096741
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Bullock PM-PL-E

Fleming PM-PL-E

Wethington PM-PM

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Davis PM-PL

ATTACHMENT 5 January 5, 2015 Press Release

NEWS RELEASE

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS BUILDING STRONG®

For Immediate Release:
January 5, 2015

Contact:
Lynne Whelan
(312) 846-5330
Chicagodistrict.pao@usace.army.mil

New Orleans Public Meeting for GLMRIS Brandon Road

CHICAGO -- Thursday, Jan. 8, 2015 the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) will host a public meeting and webinar to present information on the Great Lakes and Mississippi River Interbasin Study (GLMRIS)-Brandon Road effort. The public is invited to attend. The Jan. 8 meeting will be held at the Army Corps of Engineers, New Orleans District office, Assembly Room A, 7400 Leake Avenue, New Orleans, La. from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. (central time).

USACE plans to evaluate a range of aquatic nuisance species (ANS) controls that could be applied near the Brandon Road Lock and Dam to address the transfer of ANS from the Mississippi River Basin to the Great Lakes Basin. In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), an environmental impact statement (EIS) will be developed concurrently with the technical evaluations of possible ANS controls at the Brandon Road Lock and Dam, located near Joliet, Ill.

As part of the NEPA scoping process, USACE is seeking input from stakeholders, tribes, and the public on the scope of issues to be addressed by the GLMRIS-Brandon Road evaluation and any significant issues related to potential actions at or near the Brandon Road site. Using input obtained during the scoping period, USACE will refine the GLMRIS-Brandon Road effort to focus on significant issues, as well as eliminate issues that are not significant from further detailed study.

The meeting will begin with a presentation followed by an oral comment period. During the meeting, USACE will also collect written comments. Virtual participation will also be available via a web-enabled format.

For additional information about the public meeting including webinar details, meeting locations, or to submit an electronic comment, please visit http://glmris.anl.gov/brandon-rd. In addition to the public meetings, public comments can be submitted to USACE through Jan. 30, 2015, by using the website at http://glmris.anl.gov/brandon-rd, or through mail or hand delivery to GLMRIS - Brandon Road Scoping, 231 S. LaSalle St., Suite 1500, Chicago, IL 60604.

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ATTACHMENT 6 Sample Newspaper Advertisement

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to host public meetings in Chicagoland Area on Dec. 6 and Dec. 9.

Saturday, December 6, 2014 and Tuesday, December 9, 2014, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is hosting public meetings and webinars to present information on the Great Lakes and Mississippi River Interbasin Study (GLMRIS)-Brandon Road effort. The public is invited to attend. The December 6 meeting will be held at Argonne National Laboratory, TCS Building 240 located in Lemont, Illinois 60439 from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. The December 9 meeting will be held on the sixth floor of the Gleacher Center, University of Chicago Booth School of Business located at 450 North Cityfront Plaza Drive, Chicago, Illinois 60611 from 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

USACE plans to evaluate a range of aquatic nuisance species (ANS) controls that could be applied near the Brandon Road Lock and Dam to address the transfer of ANS from the Mississippi River Basin to the Great Lakes Basin. In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), an environmental impact statement (EIS) will be developed concurrently with the technical evaluations of possible ANS controls at the Brandon Road Lock and Dam, located near Joliet, Illinois.

As part of the NEPA scoping process, USACE is seeking input from stakeholders, tribes, and the public on the scope of issues to be addressed by the GLMRIS-Brandon Road evaluation and any significant issues related to potential actions at or near the Brandon Road site. Using input obtained during the scoping period, USACE will refine the GLMRIS-Brandon Road effort to focus on significant issues, as well as eliminate issues that are not significant from further detailed study.

The meeting will begin with a presentation followed by an oral comment period. During the meeting, USACE will also collect written comments. Virtual participation will also be available via a web-enabled format.

For additional information on the two public meetings including webinar details and availability, meeting locations, or to submit an electronic comment, please visit http://glmris.anl.gov/brandon-rd. In addition to the public meetings, public comments can be submitted to USACE through January 16, 2015, by using the website at http://glmris.anl.gov/brandon-rd, or through mail or hand delivery to GLMRIS - Brandon Road Scoping, 231 S. LaSalle St., Suite 1500, Chicago, IL 60604.