



**US Army Corps
of Engineers®**

PROJECT FACT SHEET

Wacouta Bay

Upper Mississippi River, Pool 4, River Miles 784 - 786

Pierce County, Wisconsin

Navigation Ecosystem Sustainability Program, St. Paul District

Location. Wacouta Bay is located at the head of Lake Pepin in Pool 4 of the Mississippi River. The study area spans the entirety of Wacouta Bay, located on the right descending side of the channel, approximate river miles 784-786.



Land Ownership. Potential project lands, in addition to the river bottom, are owned by the State of Wisconsin.

Resource Problem. Concerns over habitat deficiencies in Wacouta Bay, most resulting from sedimentation and turbidity, include: reduced aquatic and terrestrial habitat diversity and quality, lack of aquatic vegetation, lack of protected wetlands, and reduced abundance of fish and wildlife. Deep protected aquatic habitat for centrarchid fish and associated species is lacking in the backwaters and large shallow open water areas of Upper Lake Pepin.

NESP Project Type. Wacouta Bay Ecosystem Restoration could consist of the following NESP project types: backwater restoration, floodplain restoration, topographical diversity, island and shoreline protection, and island construction.

Project Objective. The existing Upper Pool 4 Pierce County Islands project (1122 project) considered addressing these deficiencies through the construction of numerous features in a large project area. Funding constraints reduced the scope of the project to features within the Catherine Pass area. Features within and near Wacouta Bay were also developed that would have numerous habitat benefits addressing the stated resource problems. Under the proposed project, the islands designed under the 1122

project would be revisited, and additional islands and other features within and near Wacouta Bay would be evaluated.

Potential Measures. As part of the feasibility study, a full range of measures and alternative formulation strategies would be developed and evaluated.

The following are potential measures that could be combined into an implementable alternative that may be in the federal interest, address the identified problems, and achieve the project objectives:

- Island Building and Enhancement
- Forest Enhancement and Creation
- Backwater Restoration/Dredging
- Island and Shoreline Protection
- Use of Dredged Material for Environmental Purposes

Implementation Considerations. The project was endorsed by the interagency River Resources Forum on August 24, 2021. Construction is expected to be below the ordinary high-water mark (OHWM).

Financial Information (Estimate). The estimated Total Project Cost is approximately \$15M. Project features would require minimal operation and maintenance costs. This project is expected to be constructed below the OHWM, therefore, the construction of this project would be 100% Federal and does not require a cost-share sponsor.