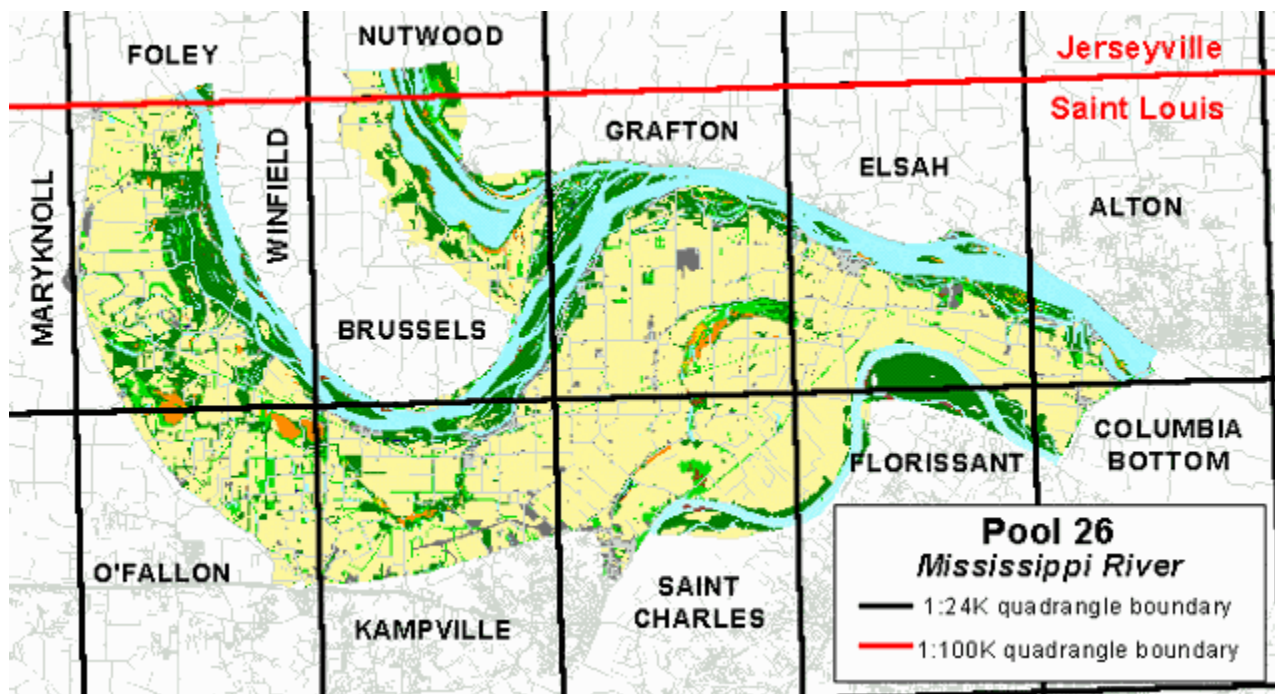


# Construction Begins On Mississippi River Habitat Restoration Project Near Grafton

January 3 2022 3:12 PM



GRAFTON/ST. LOUIS – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, St. Louis District recently awarded a 7.2-million-dollar contract to Luhr Brothers, Inc. of Columbia, Ill., to construct a Mississippi River habitat restoration project, located in Pool 26, between Upper Mississippi River Miles 207.5 – 211.5 near Grafton, Ill., in Madison and Jersey counties.

The construction under this contract includes a notched, river training structure between Piasa and Eagle's Nest Islands and four island rock rings. Construction began on December 1 and the first part of construction is scheduled to last up to eight weeks, weather pending.

The project area is located within the Illinois Department of Natural Resources Mississippi River State Fish and Wildlife Area, specifically the Piasa Island Wildlife Management Area. The Mississippi River Area's main emphasis is wetland management, with waterfowl as the primary species of concern. Piasa and Eagle's Nest Islands are locally recognized as public use areas for hunting, fishing, boating, and wildlife viewing. Several organizations, including Migratory Waterfowl Hunters Inc., Alton Motorboat Club, Alton Water Ski Club, and Illinois Federation for Outdoor Resources, are active within the project area.

In partnership with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and the Corps of Engineers the project is funded under the authority of the Upper Mississippi River Restoration Program and is intended to ensure the coordinated development and enhancement of the Upper Mississippi River system with primary emphasis on habitat restoration projects and resource monitoring.

Human activity over the past two centuries within the Upper Mississippi River basin, floodplain, and channel has altered the hydrology and biotic communities historically present in the area. These alterations have reduced the diversity and quality of aquatic (side channel and backwater) habitat and reduced the acreage of island habitat historically present throughout the area. This project provides an opportunity to improve the quality and diversity of important aquatic habitats.

In the 35-plus-year history of the program, more than 55 habitat projects benefiting approximately 100,000 acres on the Upper Mississippi River, from the Twin Cities to St. Louis, have been completed. These projects provide critical habitat for riverine species, supporting the ecosystem's overall health and resilience.