OUACHITA RIVER BASIN

MARCH 2013
FY 2013 FUNDING INFORMATION
Projects/Studies Supported by
Ouachita River Valley Association
FOREWORD

The Ouachita River Valley Association is pleased to have the opportunity to submit information outlining some of the most urgent water resources development needs in the Ouachita River Basin in Arkansas and Louisiana. We are grateful for the role the federal government through the Congress and the Administration, represented by the Corps of Engineers, has played in developing and caring for the bountiful natural resources in this basin for more than a century. Much of the economic, recreational, and natural resources preservation of the basin has been made possible through these investments.

The Ouachita River is a unique resource that serves not only the residents of the region but the nation at-large. With this opportunity comes the responsibility to conserve and protect what has been inherited from nature and those preceding us. In as much as these assets are held in national trust, it is appropriate that they are operated and maintained by the national government in partnership with State and local governments. The Ouachita River Valley Association is proud to have been a stakeholder in these efforts for more than a century.

Information presented in this booklet outlines those studies/projects of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers that the Ouachita River Valley Association strongly supports and encourages completion of at the earliest possible date. Funding levels for FY 2013 are presented for each study/project listed.* Also included is suggested language to be used in an appropriate document that would authorize bank stabilization measures on the Ouachita-Black Rivers from mile 0 to mile 460 at Remmel Dam near Hot Springs, AR, and add navigation from Mile 41.5 on the Black River, LA, at the mouth of Little River, up Little River 14,000 feet, as a project feature of the Ouachita-Black Rivers Navigation Project. Suggested language to include all the Ouachita River Levees Project as a component of the Mississippi River and Tributaries Project is included as well as authorization for a comprehensive basin wide study of the water and land resource needs.

*NOTE: The President's FY-14 budget information was not received in time to be incorporated into this document. All other information has been updated.
OUACHITA RIVER BASIN DESCRIPTION

The Ouachita River originates in northwest Arkansas in the Ouachita Mountains near Mena, Arkansas flowing southeasterly for a distance of approximately 520 miles through Arkansas and Louisiana to the Red River near Jonesville, Louisiana. Its watershed stretches from western Arkansas to near Little Rock and south along its border with the Mississippi River basin. Cities along its path include Hot Springs, Arkadelphia, Malvern, Camden, Smackover, El Dorado and Crossett, Arkansas and Sterlington, Monroe and West Monroe, Columbia, and Jonesville in Louisiana.

The basin may be divided into several distinctly different regions. From the headwaters it flows as a mountain stream through the Ouachita National Forest to form Lake Ouachita, the largest lake fully within the state of Arkansas. Below Lake Ouachita it forms Lake Hamilton and Lake Catherine and flows through a transition area near Arkadelphia and Malvern to the West Gulf Coastal Plain near Camden. Below Camden the river gradient is much less and has been developed for commercial navigation via the Ouachita-Black Navigation Project, a distance of some 337 miles from its confluence with the Red River. Four locks and dams, H.K. Thatcher, Felsenthal, Columbia, and Jonesville, provide a 9-foot deep, 100-foot wide, year around channel to the lower Red River and the Atchafalaya River to the Gulf of Mexico.

The diverse nature of the basin provides a wide range of habitat for wildlife of the region. Felsenthal National Wildlife Refuge and Upper Ouachita Wildlife Refuge provide more than 100,000 acres of conservation area.

As diverse as the various regions are, they are part of a single watershed whose assets serve not only the region but also the nation.
PROJECT/STUDY SUMMARY
FY 13

Funding requests and supporting information are presented in the following pages for the four funding categories of Operation and Maintenance, General; General Investigations; MR&T, Maintenance and Construction, General.

The President's Budget includes $7,507,000 for Operations and Maintenance of the Ouachita-Black Navigation Project, Red River to Camden, AR for FY 2013. This amount will cover operations and maintenance of the four L&D’s and permits only minimal dredging. Historical under-funding of the navigation project has resulted in a maintenance backlog of over $24.7 million. The most critical deficiencies include very limited dredging funds and the lack of a lock closure system at the H. K. Thatcher L&D. Additional capability maintenance funds of $24,691,000 are requested to address this critical backlog with priority on the $3.1 million maintenance dredging and $6.0 million for construction of stoplogs slots at the H.K. Thatcher Lock & Dam. Recreational facilities have also been allowed to deteriorate and have not been updated with age and increased usage.

One General Investigation Study is being requested. The study is to perform a reconnaissance level study of the watershed to determine current and future water and land resources needs of the basin. Additional capability funding of $200,000 is requested.

The lower reaches of the Ouachita River below Monroe were at one time included in the Mississippi River and Tributaries Project to provide bank stabilization and levee construction. Portions of the Ouachita River Levees in the Monroe, LA area and north are part of the MR&T Project as a result of WRDA 07. Action is now underway to include language in an authorizing document to have the entire Red-Ouachita Basin Levees, AR and LA; and Ouachita River Levees, LA Project made a component of the MR&T project. Suggested corrective language for WRDA 2007 is shown on Fact Sheet # 2. An additional capability amount of $2,300,000 is requested for bank stabilization repair work under the MR&T Maintenance category which is authorized.

Under the Construction, General funding category, the President's Budget does not contain any funding for the Ouachita River Levees. However, the Vicksburg District has expressed a FY 2013 additional capability of nearly $20.2 million for these three lakes to address critical backlog items. The priority "additional capability" for each lake includes various construction items that will increase the quality of the recreation experience for visitors (shown in Table 1).

Lack of bank protection has resulted in numerous bank failures that are now a danger to public infrastructure including levees, some of which have been 'set-back' more than once. The Ouachita-Black Rivers Navigation Project did not include provisions for bank stabilization and there is no on-going authority for this work. WRDA project authorization suggested language for navigation project bank stabilization is included at Fact Sheet # 6. Also, suggested language is submitted for further amending the Navigation Project by adding navigation from Mile 41.5 on the Black River, at the mouth of Little River, upstream 14,000 feet as a project feature. This is described in detail at Fact Sheet # 7.
The FY13 funding status for each of these projects/studies is summarized in Table 1. A letter from MG John W. Peabody, Commander, Mississippi Valley Division, dated Oct. 15, 2012, expressing support for these projects/studies is shown at the end of this booklet.
Table 1
FY 2013 FUNDING STATUS
ORVA SUPPORTED STUDIES/PROJECTS
OUACHITA RIVER BASIN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROJECT/STUDY</th>
<th>FY13 PRESIDENT'S BUDGET</th>
<th>FY13 PRIORITY CAPABILITY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Ouachita-Black Navigation Project, Red River to Camden, AR</td>
<td>$ 7,507,000</td>
<td>$ 3,125,000*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Dredging</td>
<td></td>
<td>$ 6,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Stoplog Slots</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Red-Ouachita Basin Levees, AR and LA</td>
<td>$ 0</td>
<td>$ 2,300,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Ouachita River and Tributaries, AR &amp; LA Watershed Study</td>
<td>$ 0</td>
<td>$ 200,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Ouachita River Levees, LA</td>
<td>$ 0</td>
<td>$ 1,100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Arkansas Lakes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Lake Ouachita, AR</td>
<td>$ 8,534,000</td>
<td>$ 1,211,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. DeGray Lake, AR</td>
<td>$ 6,881,000</td>
<td>$ 1,267,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Lake Greeson, AR</td>
<td>$ 4,659,000</td>
<td>$ 532,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Bank Stabilization, Ouachita-Black Rivers, Mile 0 to 460 Remmel Dam (not authorized)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Ouachita-Black Navigation Project, Addition of navigation from Mile 41.5 on the Black River LA, at the mouth of Little River, upstream 14,000 feet (not authorized).</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Priority additional funding request.
FACT SHEET # 1

OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE, GENERAL

OUACHITA-BLACK NAVIGATION PROJECT, RED RIVER TO CAMDEN, ARKANSAS

Authorization

Purpose
❖ Navigation

Location and Description
❖ The Ouachita-Black Rivers Navigation Project is a navigation channel on the Red, Black and Ouachita Rivers extending 382 miles from Old River to Camden, Arkansas. The project consists of four locks and dams and provides a channel with minimum depth of 9 feet, a minimum bottom width of 100 feet and a minimum radius of 1,000 feet in channel bends. The project also includes the diversion of Catahoula Lake near Jonesville, Louisiana, for ecological reasons.

FY 2013 Funds
❖ President's Budget: Budgeted funds of $7,507,000 are being used to continue operations of four locks and dams and perform minimal dredging. No funds are included for dredging. It requires $7.5 mil. to properly operate and maintain the project.
❖ Additional Capability: Additional funds of $9,125,000 could be used to:
   1. $3,125,000 – dredging operations (priority request);
   2. $6,000,000 - initiates cutting slots at H.K. Thatcher L&D.

Issues and Other Information
❖ Dredging is required on an annual basis to maintain the 9’ x 100’ navigation channel. Without annual dredging, waterborne shipments will cease or will be very limited due to “light loading” of barges. With the $3.1 million requested for dredging, shipping operations will be normal and the project will produce the benefits to the region and Nation as designed. Approximately 1.0 million tons (crude oil, gasoline, and diesel, agricultural grain, fertilizer, aggregates, etc.) of bulk commodities would be shipped throughout the waterway. The need for $3,125,000 for dredging the Ouachita-Black Rivers in FY13 is the top priority of ORVA.
❖ The Poiree system does not meet the new hydraulic steel structure (HSS) criteria nor do the stoplogs. Lack of certified lock and dam stoplogs for use in dewatering and closure
of lock miter gates and dam tainter gates to make repairs or inspections increases risk for loss of pool or lock closure that would shut the entire system down north of Thatcher L&D in the event emergency repairs are needed. This would cause a catastrophic economic impact to the locals due to having to use more expensive ways to ship goods and the loss of jobs. It should be noted that the contract for construction of stoplog slots at Felsenthal Lock and Dam was done for $4.1 million – almost $2.0 million less than requested by the Corps. ORVA believes the contract for H.K. Thatcher could be considerably less than being requested. ORVA strongly supports funding of the $6 million to initiate construction of stoplog slots at H.K. Thatcher L&D; however, it appears that it could be done for $4.0 - $4.5 million based on the fact that the work at H.K. Thatcher will be the same that was done at the Felsenthal Lock and Dam.

- Loss of navigation would have significant adverse economic impacts to the region. Significant private sector workforce layoffs would occur. Approximately 28,000 private sector jobs with an annual payroll of $315,000,000 are connected to the Ouachita-Black Rivers.

- With no funds provided for dredging in FY11 and FY13, and in light of future budget reductions, the Corps of Engineers has reduced operational services at the locks and dams. We are terribly concerned about the implementation of the Corps Inland Marine Transportation System Study which has already reduced the operational services provided by the Ouachita-Black Rivers Navigation Project. The Corps plan, which began on July 29, 2012, involves operating the four locks for only two shifts daily. This plan was implemented after the Corps conducted five public meetings and published in the plan in the Federal Register for public comment. Throughout the entire process the stakeholders overwhelming objected to any reduction in the levels of service. Our primary concern was the adverse impact to potential economic development that would be associated with the navigation project and increased costs to shippers from delays. (NOTE: Supplemental funds in the amount of $3.2 Mil. were received in FY12 for dredging operations and dredging operations were conducted during 2012. Dredging was done from Crossett Harbor south to the mouth of the Black River).

- The criteria used by the Corps to determine the level of service follows:
**TABLE 1: DEFINITION OF LEVELS OF SERVICE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEVEL #</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Full Service 24/7/365</td>
<td>24 hours per day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Reduced Service - Two Shifts per Day</td>
<td>16-20 hours per day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year (basically two shifts of either 8 or 10 hrs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Limited Service - Single Shift</td>
<td>8-12 hours per day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Scheduled Service - Set times per day</td>
<td>Lockages (including recreation craft) at set times per day. For example 8 a.m. and 4 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Weekends &amp; Holidays</td>
<td>Lockages on weekends and holidays only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Service by Appointment</td>
<td>Commercial lockages by appointment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TABLE 2: GUIDE TO IDENTIFYING LEVELS OF SERVICE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEVEL #</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>GUIDELINE FOR RANGE OF LOCK OPERATION DATA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Full Service 24/7/365</td>
<td>More than 1000 commercial lockages per year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Reduced Service - Two Shifts per Day</td>
<td>Between 500 to 1000 commercial lockages per year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Limited Service - Single Shift</td>
<td>100 to 500 commercial lockages per year or greater than 1000 recreational lockages per year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Scheduled Service - Set times per day</td>
<td>Limited commercial (less than 100 per year) and/or substantial recreational traffic, with a more consistent daytime pattern of lockage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Weekends &amp; Holidays</td>
<td>Little to no commercial lockages with significant recreational lockages (500 or more per year)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Service by Appointment</td>
<td>Limited commercial traffic with no consistent tern of lockage</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The level of service implemented by the Corps of Engineers on July 29, 2012 for the four locks on the Ouachita-Black navigation Project is as follows:

- **Jonesville Lock and Dam**
  - Level 2  18 Hours per Day  0500 - 1400 and 1700 - 0200
- **Columbia Lock and Dam**
  - Level 2  18 Hours per Day  0500 - 1400 and 1700 - 0200
- **Felsenthal Lock and Dam**
  - Level 2  16 Hours per Day  0500 - 1300 and 1700 - 0100
- **H.K. Thatcher Lock and Dam**
  - Level 2  16 Hours per Day  0500 - 1300 and 1700 - 0100
The proposed future levels of service for the four locks are shown below:

1) Remain at the 29 July 2012 Levels of Service at all Locks until remote operations of tainter gates at Felsenthal and H.K. Thatcher are funded (requested in FY14 Budget) and made functional.

2) Transition to IMTS Levels of Service at Felsenthal and H.K. Thatcher based strictly on 3 year averages of commercial and recreational data after remote operations of tainter gates are brought online.

3) Remain at the 29 July 2012 Levels of Service at Jonesville and Columbia until 3 year averages of commercial data show a need to reassess the Level of Service.

- As far as delays in shipping are concerned, from August 1, 2012 through January 31, 2013, there were 62 tows delayed out of 463 that transited through the locks. Average delay time was just over two hours. Total delay time for the 62 tows was approximately 128 hours. At $300/hr, this represents losses to the shipping industry of about $38,400.

- We were pleased to hear there are no indications that the pool levels will be lowered under any of the levels of service. Lowering of the pool levels would be devastating to navigation, municipal, industrial and agricultural water users, recreation and fish and wildlife.

- Based on information developed by seven shippers on the Ouachita-Black River the economic losses from having to light-load to 8 feet and operate at less than full 24/7/365, would amount to $9.91 million annually, more than three times the additional $3.1 million needed by the Corps to operate the project in an efficient manner. It should be noted that 15 companies shipped products on the Ouachita-Black Rivers in 2010; therefore, the actual economic losses would be much greater than the $9.9 million calculated. This assumes no funds for dredging and reduced operating times for the locks.

- Our Board of Director’s discussed possible reduced operational services in detail and passed a resolution early on opposing any plan of action that operates the system less than 24 hours daily, seven days per week. The Ouachita-Black Rivers Navigation Project was signed into law by both Houses of Congress and the President of the United States in the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1950 to be operated and maintained at full Federal expense. Additional project authorizations have been added by subsequent Water Resources Development Acts. We do not accept any reduction in navigation services from the authorized operation and maintenance features mandated by law. A copy of the ORVA Resolution dated July 26, 2011 follows. This was our position throughout the whole 18 month review process and remains the position of ORVA today. ORVA
Position Paper dated February 17, 2012 also follows and addresses the proposed plan as presented by the Corps at a Project Delivery Team Meeting on February 7, 2012 in Monroe, LA.

✗ In summary, we are extremely concerned about the reduced level of funding associated with the Navigation Project and the potential adverse economic and environmental impacts associated with such reductions. Reduction in operational services to two shifts daily at the four locks in FY12 and potential future reductions further intensifies the situation. We discussed this at length with our Congressional members and Corps of Engineers Headquarters officials during our last Washington D. C. visit (September, 2012) stressing that this project needs to be funded at a minimum level of $10,600,000 to operate at a level of satisfactory efficiency. We will continue these discussions with Washington level officials in March 2013.
RESOLUTION OF THE OUACHITA RIVER VALLEY ASSOCIATION
ADDRESSING PROPOSED
REDUCED OPERATION SERVICES OF THE OUACHITA-BLACK NAVIGATION
PROJECT, RED RIVER TO CAMDEN, AR BY THE VICKSBURG DISTRICT, U. S. ARMY
CORPS OF ENGINEERS

-Whereas, the Ouachita-Black Rivers Navigation Project is a navigation channel on the Red, Black, and Ouachita Rivers extending 382 miles from Old River to Camden, Arkansas. The project consists of four locks and dams and provides a channel with minimum depth of 9 feet, a minimum bottom width of 100 feet and a minimum radius of 1,000- feet in channel bends. The project also includes the diversion of Catahoula Lake near Jonesville, LA for ecological reasons.

-Whereas, the Project was signed into law by both Houses of Congress and the President of the United States in the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1950 and modified by the Rivers and Harbor Act of 1960.

-Whereas, operation and maintenance of the project is authorized by Congress at full Federal expense.

-Whereas, due to budget constraints, the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers is considering operating the project at less than full time/reduced dredging levels, as authorized.

-Whereas, the Ouachita River Valley Association does not accept any reduction in navigation services from the authorized operation and maintenance features mandated by law.

-Whereas, the Ouachita River Valley Association understands the national budget needs to be reduced, however the Navigation Project is an economic engine that generates personal income and jobs in the Ouachita River Basin and any reduction in project services will have a detrimental impact on the economy and the environment.

-Whereas, having invested over $260 Mil. in construction of this project, it is not prudent to neglect this infrastructure investment for an annual savings of $3 Mil.
Therefore, the Ouachita River Valley Association resolves that the Corps of Engineers operate and maintain all features of the Ouachita-Black Rivers Navigation Project on a 24 hour basis, year round, at project specifications, as congressionally authorized. Any reduction in services is unacceptable.

NOTE: This resolution was unanimously approved by the ORVA Board of Directors at the quarterly meeting on June 28, 2011.

Chris Claybaker, President
Ouachita River Valley Association
P. O. Box 913
Camden, AR. 71711
FEBRUARY 17, 2012

ORVA POSITION PAPER
QUACHITA–BLACK RIVERS NAVIGATION PROJECT
PROPOSED REDUCTION IN OPERATIONAL LOCK SERVICES BY VICKSBURG
DISTRICT,
U. S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS AS PRESENTED AT
2012 ORVA PDT- FEBRUARY 7, 2012-MONROE, LA

OUACHITA RIVER VALLEY ASSOCIATION’S (ORVA) RESPONSE

1. First and foremost, ORVA’s position is as stated in the Resolution entitled “RESOLUTION OF THE OUACHITA RIVER VALLEY ASSOCIATION ADDRESSING PROPOSED REDUCED OPERATION SERVICES OF THE OUACHITA-BLACK NAVIGATION PROJECT, RED RIVER TO CAMDEN, AR, BY THE VICKSBURG DISTRICT, U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS”, dated July 26, 2011 and presented to the Vicksburg District, U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, same date.

In summary, our position is that the Navigation Project was signed into law by both Houses of Congress and the President of the United States in the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1950 and modified by the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1960, to be operated and maintained at full Federal expense; therefore the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, as the construction, operation and maintenance arm of Congress, should operate and maintain all features of the project on a 24 hour basis, year round, at project specifications, as Congressionally authorized—any reduction in services is unacceptable. Having stated this, our comments to the Vicksburg District’s proposed reduction in operational services plan as presented on February 7, 2012, 2012 ORVA PDT, at the Tensas Basin Levee District’s Hqs. in Monroe, LA, are stated below.

2. Specific comments follow:

Reference slide entitled “PROPOSED LOCKING SCHEDULE”

1-Mid Summer 2012-ORVA suggests:

-Jonesville and Columbia-0300-2100/7 days/365
- Double Cut Tows-conducted during same time frame as above
  - Felsenthal and Thatcher-0400-2000/7 days/365

2-Post IMTS LOS Implementation in 2013-ORVA suggests:

  - Jonesville and Columbia-same as Mid Summer
  - Felsenthal and Thatcher-0400-2000/7 days/365 (use Level 4)

  OR

  as an absolute minimum

  - Felsenthal and Thatcher-0400-0800 and 1600-2000/7 days/365

3-Rationale for ORVA’s position:

- As previously stated, our position is that the project needs to be operated on a full time basis. We strongly believe if the upper two locks are only operated three days a week and with the lower two only operating essentially two shifts per day as suggested, tonnage will decrease dramatically, no new shippers will consider locating along the Ouachita, and eventually the project will be placed in “caretaker” status. Since operational levels are being based on tonnages, there is no way tonnage is going to increase with the project being operated on a limited basis.

- We believe that the Corps decision on reduced lock operation is flawed in that all Corps economic studies assume full project operation to produce the optimum level of benefits. The decision to cut back in operation until tonnages increase runs completely contrary to the approach used in determining if a project would be built. It is just not logical to think tonnage would ever increase when you cut operational hours to the extent proposed.

- We are talking about the death of one of the primary generators of economic and environmental activity in the Ouachita River Basin-the Ouachita-Black Rivers Navigation Project. With the United States economy appearing to be back on the upswing, it is premature to take such drastic action. Furthermore, what is done on the Ouachita-Black system will likely set a precedent for other navigation systems in the United States. We encourage the Corps to examine all possible alternatives to keep the project operating on a full time basis.

- In developing alternatives in response to reduced budgets, one must keep in mind that the Ouachita-Black Rivers Navigation Project is a multi-purpose project providing navigation,
recreation, flood control, water supply and fish and wildlife benefits. Each of these purposes has a specific customer base that must be considered. The proposed locking schedule ignores the recreation public in that most hunters and fishermen prefer to engage in those activities in the early morning and late afternoon periods. With the locks not beginning to operate until 0700 and being closed from 1600 to 1900, the prime times for these recreational activities will not be available where transit through the locks is desired. We don’t see much demand for recreational craft to be locked through during the 1900-0400 timeframe. With the recreational craft comprising 44% of the nearly 3,200 vessels locked through in 2010, they should be locked at a time favorable to the activity. With this in mind, we believe the locks should be operated on a continuous basis for available hours rather than splitting the shifts as shown. Also, we believe our tows could schedule their routes so as to arrive in a 16 or 18 hour window as easily as having the two shifts split for 3 or 4 hours. Thus, our suggestions for Mid Summer 2012 are as shown in paragraph 2.

- Post IMTS LOS Implementation in 2013-Felsenthal and Thatcher- ORVA is TOTALLY opposed to operating the Felsenthal and Thatcher Locks only three days per week and on holidays. This would be FATAL to the Navigation Project. We believe that Level of Service 4, rather than Level 5, should be the basis for determining lock operation since there is limited commercial and substantial recreational traffic. Two commercial firms, Cross Oil and TETRA, operate tows on the Ouachita River and utilize the navigation pool in the southern and northern portions of the project. In 2010, over 1,100 recreational craft were locked through the Felsenthal and Thatcher locks. As you are aware, Cross Oil had shifted to pipeline/truck for their products in 2011, since the project was not dredged to sufficient depth to allow for economical and safe shipping. They have since come back to the river for partial shipments and have approximately 30,000 tons moving on the system the first quarter of 2012. The demand for the products of both companies is good and they anticipate increased shipments in the future. Level 4 would allow lock operation 7 days a week as opposed to only 3 days under Level 5. We believe the upper two locks should be operated from 0400-2000/7days/365; if mandated by reduced budget constraints, this is our preferred option. As an absolute minimum, Felsenthal and Thatcher should be operated from 0400-0800 and from 1600-2000/7 days/365. This would better accommodate all users. The Corps plan has them being operated for a total of 48 hours over the three days per week, from 0800-1600 and from 2000-0400. Our minimum is for 56 hours, only 8 more hours per week than the Corps. Not many recreationists would lock during the 2000-0400 period in our view.

- As a minimum, the locks need to be made available on an appointment basis for commercial traffic. It would be most difficult for TETRA to hit the Felsenthal lock when it opens on Friday, travel to the Port of Crosssett, load 2 barges and get back through before closing on Sunday. Any weather, equipment, or other delays, caused by lock conditions or recreational user issues, will mean the tow could be behind the lock for days! Having the ability to make firm appointments to operate the locks will allow TETRA, or any commercial operator, the ability to continue planned transits, as well as future growth. If the locks are closed for four days, Cross Oil would find other means to transport their product. Commercial tows just cannot feasibly wait 4 or 5 days to
lock through. An “appointment basis” condition for commercial tows needs to be specified as part of the plan.

- Cross Oil and Refining Co., located at Smackover, AR, has a $60 Mil. construction program underway at present to double plant capacity. An additional 60 employees will be hired. Their purchase of crude oil for refining purposes will double after the plant expansion is completed- this supply will be received by pipeline, truck and barge. Some finished products, such as diesel fuel, are planned to be shipped back down the Ouachita River in barges that deliver crude oil- in fact, that has already started.

- TETRA invested over $100 Mil. at El Dorado, AR in a calcium chloride plant in order to meet the demands of the growing gulf coast region. TETRA’s business plans are to continue to increase the production of the El Dorado, AR plant in future years based upon the growing customer base and markets. One of the primary markets that TETRA will grow in is the oil field segment of the gulf coast area. This product is shipped to various terminals and customers via barge from their Crossett, AR terminal and they anticipate continued growth in future years. Without access to the gulf coast market via the Ouachita River, TETRA’s operation at El Dorado and Crossett, AR will be damaged.

- The navigation pool provides a reliable source of surface water for industrial, municipal, electric utility companies and agricultural use along the system both in AR and LA. Some of the larger industries include El Dorado Chemical, Entegra/Union Power Partners, Great Lakes/Chemtura Central Plant, Lion Oil Refinery and Arkansas Electric Co-Operative in Arkansas and Graphic Packaging and Entergy in Louisiana—these plants provide employment for several thousand residents of the Basin. The cities of Hot Springs, Malvern, Arkadelphia, and Camden in AR and Monroe, LA withdraw their municipal water from the Ouachita River. In addition, there are numerous agricultural withdrawal sites along the river. By using surface water from the Ouachita River, Sparta Aquifer water levels in AR and LA groundwater level monitoring wells have increased since 2004, one as much as 62 feet in the El Dorado, AR area. The importance of maintaining the navigation pool can’t be overemphasized as South Arkansas’ and North Louisiana’s reliance on the Ouachita River for surface water and its multiple contributions to the overall economic wellbeing will only increase.

- The navigation pool also provides for a flourishing fish and wildlife habitat for the Ouachita River Basin. Sportsmen are attracted to the river area by the hundreds to pursue excellent hunting and fishing opportunities. The Navigation Project has in effect created a totally new ecological system by pooling water on a year round basis. The Felsenthal Pool, created by the navigation project, has created one of the premier hunting and fishing areas for South Arkansas and helps the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service meet its mandate of providing wintering waterfowl habitat in compliance with the North American Waterfowl Management Plan. The recreational opportunities created by the navigation project has created hundreds of jobs in the outdoor sporting areas, bait shops, sporting goods suppliers, boat dealers, and camp grounds just to name a few. These businesses create a strong economic impact on local communities that would be
lost without the continued operation of the project. Without the project, the permanent pools of water would not exist and there would be times during the year that a person could walk across the river bottom. Navigation, flood control, water supply, recreation and fish and wildlife would be drastically impacted and in most cases cease to exist.

- The Felsenthal National Wildlife Refuge, covering 65,000 acres in Ashley, Bradley and Union counties, is the world’s largest green-tree reservoir. The refuge comprises the 15,000-acre Felsenthal Pool on the Ouachita River that is approximately 36,000 acres during the winter season. The objective of the refuge is to provide and enhance a reliable environment for migratory waterfowl and other birds. The refuge offers a habitat for almost 100 kinds of birds and many more species during the migratory season. Furthermore, it provides habitat and protection for endangered species such as the red-cockaded woodpecker, threatened American alligator, and bald eagle. Since the refuge has a capability of 36,000 acres during winter flooding, it has become an important habitat for waterfowl with the uttermost population over 300,000 birds in recent years. In 1998, the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission transferred many American black bears, the only kind of bears in Arkansas, from the White River refuge into the Felsenthal National Wildlife Refuge for habitat recovery.

- And finally, the pool provides ample volume and flow for municipal and industrial treated wastewater discharge. Also, as we learned this past October with Georgia Pacific in Crossett, AR, 24/7 gate operation is essential in times of low flow restrictions in order for discharge permits to meet minimum cfs.

- Provisions should be made to have someone at the locks at all times even if it entails hiring contract security personnel. The risk for theft and vandalism are too great to not have these structures manned at all times.

- The Corps should implement a program of cross training the lock and gate operators, if not already in place. This would permit a better utilization of limited staff to keep the locks and gates operational in a more cost effective manner.

- The possibility of state and other federal agencies being involved from a cost sharing perspective should be explored. The states of LA and AR and the U. S. Fish and Wildlife benefit from the project and possibly could share in the overall operational and maintenance costs.

3. These comments are furnished in interest of coordination/collaboration/being a team player, etc. And do not in any way imply ORVA’s consent or concurrence with any plan that provides less than 24/7/365 operation of the Ouachita-Black Rivers Navigation Project.

4. Thanks for the opportunity to comment on the proposed plan.

Mike Dumas
President, ORVA
Dredge Butcher Conducting Dredging Operations on the Ouachita River
$3.1 Million Needed Annually for Dredging Operations
There is potential for substantial increases in waterborne commerce being shipped on the upper two pools of the Ouachita-Black Rivers Navigation Project. Cross Oil and Refining Co. and TETRA Technologies are presently transporting products. Management officials of these companies are very concerned about the inability to dredge and lack of capability to dewater the H. K. Thatcher L&D and the disastrous economic impact that would occur if shipping was shut down. Having a safe and dependable system is critical in recruiting new industry to the area.
Louisiana and Arkansas
Ouachita - Black Waterway
FACT SHEET # 2

MR&T MAINTENANCE

RED–OUACHITA BASIN LEVEES, ARKANSAS AND LOUISIANA

Authorization –

- WRDA 2007, Section 3013 for Section 1. Additional authorization is required for remaining sections.

Location and Description

- The Ouachita River Levee system runs up the east bank of the Ouachita River from Sandy Bayou to Bastrop, LA on Bayou Bartholomew including flood protection for Monroe, and ring levees on the west bank of the Ouachita River at Columbia, Bawcomville, and West Monroe and the Calion Protection Works. Critical erosion problems occur along the Ouachita and Black Rivers that threaten to cause catastrophic flooding and hindrance to navigation. This erosion endangers levees, cities, historic sites, and other properties of value to residents of the area. This problem places considerable burden on the municipalities, counties, parishes, levee districts, and navigation interests who have to deal with the problems associated with the continued erosive nature of the river.

FY 2013 Funds

- Additional Capability: FY 2013 capability of $2,300,000 is identified for three critical bank stabilization work sites. This work is authorized

Issues and Other Information

- Section 3013 of WRDA 2007 included language restoring the Ouachita River Levees under the Mississippi River and Tributaries Project authorized by Section 1 of the Flood Control Act of May 15, 1928. This includes approximately 43 miles of levees and associated drainage features on the east bank of the Ouachita River and Bayou Bartholomew from Bastrop, LA to just below Monroe, LA, approximately 1.9 miles of floodwall in Monroe, LA and approximately 7.2 miles of levees and associated drainage features on the west back of the Ouachita River at West Monroe. However, it does not reinstate approximately 62.8 miles of the Ouachita River Levees feature that was authorized by Section 6 of the 1928 act that is located below Monroe, LA on the east bank.

- The Ouachita River Levee system runs up the east bank of the Ouachita River from Sandy Bayou (station 5585+--) to Bastrop, LA on Bayou Bartholomew including flood
protection for Monroe, and ring levees on the west bank of the Ouachita River at Columbia, Bawcomville, and West Monroe and the Calion Protection Works. High water in FY 2009 and 2010 on the Ouachita River caused additional damage to banks. A total of 12 sites were studied while only four sites were approved to be repaired with PL 84-99 funds. These four sites were completed with PL-84-99 funds.

SUGGESTED LANGUAGE: Language to amend WRDA 2007 reference the Red-Ouachita River Basin Leves, Arkansas and Louisiana to include all of the Levee Project as part of the MR&T Project follows:

BILL LANGUAGE
RED-OUACHITA RIVER BASIN LEVEES, ARKANSAS AND LOUISIANA FLOOD CONTROL, MISSISSIPPI RIVER AND TRIBUTARIES MAINTENANCE

Section 3013(b) of the Water Resources Development Act of 2007 (P.L. 110-114; 121 Stat. 1109) is amended by striking the language after “except” and inserting “that the levees and floodwalls on the east bank of the Ouachita River from Sandy Bayou, station 5585+00, to below Monroe, LA, station 2270+00, and thence up the east bank of Bayou Bartholomew from station 2270+00 to Bastrop at station 0+00; and the ring levees and floodwall on the west bank of the Ouachita River at West Monroe, LA, authorized by the Flood Control Act of 1928, sections 1 and 6; at Columbia, LA, authorized by the Flood Control Act of 22 June 1936, section 5; and at Bawcomville, LA, authorized by the Rivers and Harbors Act of 17 May 1950, section 101; and the Monroe Floodwall authorized by the Rivers and Harbors Act of 17 May 1950, Section 101 shall be incorporated into the Mississippi River and Tributaries Project authorized by the Flood Control Act of 1928, section 1 and afforded operation and maintenance responsibilities as provided under section 3 of that Act (45 Stat. 535)”.

Note the following letter dated January 12, 2011 in which the Federal Emergency Management Agency was notified by the Vicksburg District, U. S. Army Corps of Engineers that the Ouachita River Levees are not certifiable. Deaccreditation of the Ouachita River Levees is now underway.
Mr. Gary Zimmerer, Civil Engineer  
Flood Hazard Mapping  
Federal Emergency Management Agency  
FRC 800 North Loop 288  
Denton, Texas 76209–3698

Dear Mr. Zimmerer:

In response to the request from the Tensas Basin Levee District, the Vicksburg District Corps of Engineers has completed the Levee System Evaluation Report for the East Bank Ouachita River Levee contained in Morehouse and Ouachita Parishes in the State of Louisiana for the National Flood Insurance Program. I have enclosed a copy of the report and a copy of the levee evaluation letter for your reference.

Unfortunately, the evaluation and findings show that the levee system fails to meet current criteria and can not be certified in its current state.

If you have any questions, please contact Craig McRaney, Levee Safety Program Manager, at 601-631-5272.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

[Name]
Colonel, Corps of Engineers  
District Commander

Enclosures
FACT SHEET # 3

GENERAL INVESTIGATIONS

OUACHITA RIVER WATERSHED, ARKANSAS AND LOUISIANA

Authorization
❖ Sec 216, FCA 1970, as amended by WRDA 86.

Purpose
❖ Flood Damage Reduction, Navigation, Water Supply, Recreation, Fish and Wildlife, Ecosystem Restoration, etc.

FY 2013 Funds
❖ Additional Capability - Funds in the amount of $200,000 could be used to prepare a reconnaissance-level study to prepare an updated plan for the development and conservation of water and related land resources for the Ouachita River Basin in Arkansas and Louisiana.

Issues and Other Information
❖ This proposal has strong support by stakeholders who have been working for several years to initiate a watershed-level study for the area. A reconnaissance study will serve as a basis for both the Corps of Engineers and other agencies to examine current and future problems and needs in the Ouachita River Basin related to flood damage reduction, navigation, water supply (surface and ground water), bank stabilization, ecosystem restoration, and recreation as required in order to assess the extent of these problems and the Federal interest in measures to address them. Resolutions supporting the funding/initiation of the Reconnaissance Study have been passed by the Union County (AR) Water Conservation Board; Arkansas State Parks, Recreation and Travel Commission, and Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism; and the Sparta Groundwater Conservation District Commission of Louisiana. These are attached. Suggested study language is shown below.

Bill Language:
OUACHITA RIVER WATERSHED, ARKANSAS AND LOUISIANA RECONNAISSANCE STUDY

❖ Ouachita River Watershed, Arkansas and Louisiana - "Provided further, that using $200,000 appropriated herein, the Secretary of the Army, acting through the Chief of Engineers, is directed to proceed with reconnaissance studies addressing current and future
problems and needs in the Ouachita River Basin related to flood damage reduction, navigation, water supply (surface and ground water), bank stabilization, ecosystem restoration, and recreation as required in order to assess the extent of these problems and the Federal interest in measures to address them."

"A River State of Opportunities, A Century Plus of Commitment"

Ouachita River Valley Association
Serving Arkansas and Louisiana
Ouachita River Watershed
RESOLUTION 2009 - 1

A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE LOUISIANA SPARTA COMMISSION’S REQUEST TO ARKANSAS’ AND LOUISIANA’S RESPECTIVE CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATIONS TO SUPPORT, THROUGH AUTHORIZATION AND FUNDING, A U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS-INITIATED RECONNAISSANCE STUDY OF THE OUACHITA RIVER AND TRIBUTARIES IN ARKANSAS AND LOUISIANA

WHEREAS, water resource needs in North Central Louisiana are stated in Louisiana Revised Statute (LA RS) 38:§3087.131: “The increasing use of water for municipal, industrial, agricultural, recreational, and other purposes in North Central Louisiana is a matter of great public interest; the continued uncontrolled use of groundwater from Sparta and other aquifers may create critical problems”; and the public welfare requires that such water be put to the highest beneficial use; and

WHEREAS, Act 1050 of the 1999 Arkansas General Assembly addresses a critical groundwater area in Bradley, Calhoun, Columbia, Ouachita and Union Counties in South Arkansas and authorizes creation of critical groundwater county conservation boards and set forth the purposes and powers of such boards, and

WHEREAS, the Union County Water Conservation Board (UCWCB) formed on June 24, 1999 and shortly thereafter adopted its mission statement: The guiding purpose and primary objective of the Union County Water Conservation Board is to conserve, protect, and maintain the Sparta Formation Aquifer as a continuing source of high quality, potable water for current and future consumers by providing for affordable, alternate sources of fresh water, pursuant to the authority and responsibility granted by the State of Arkansas.”; and

WHEREAS, LA RS38:§3087.131 created the Sparta Groundwater Conservation District Commission (Sparta Commission) “to study these matters and how to provide for the efficient administration, conservation, and orderly development of groundwater resources in the parishes of Bienville, Bossier, Caddo, Caldwell, Claiborne, Jackson, LaSalle, Lincoln, Morehouse, Natchitoches, Ouachita, Richland, Sabine, Union, Webster, and Winn”; and

WHEREAS, the Sparta Commission resolved at a regular meeting on January 11, 2007, to advocate for the funding of projects that the Commission endorses as consistent with its statutory purposes; and

WHEREAS, the Sparta Commission recently joined forces with the Ouachita River Valley Association and both organizations believe that a Reconnaissance Study of the Ouachita River and Tributaries in Arkansas and Louisiana would serve as a vehicle to bring Federal, State, and Local agencies together to study and determine the way ahead for water supply in this region of Louisiana and Arkansas; and

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WHEREAS, the UCWCB has invested over $65 million in private and public monies to construct facilities providing an alternative surface water source, the Ouachita River, to industries previously relying on the Sparta Aquifer, and

WHEREAS, the UCWCB recognizes that the Sparta aquifer in South Arkansas and North Louisiana recognizes no geographic boundaries, and

WHEREAS, the UCWCB continues to monitor the Sparta aquifer’s recovery in South Arkansas and North Louisiana, and

WHEREAS, the UCWCB has partnered in the past with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Vicksburg District to complete a portion of the $65 million infrastructure, and

WHEREAS, the UCWCB seeks to strengthen collaborations between North Louisiana and South Arkansas resulting in more effective and efficient management of the Sparta aquifer, and

WHEREAS, the Vicksburg District, U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, located in Vicksburg, Ms. has responsibility for the development of water and land resources in the Ouachita River Basin and has expressed a capability to initiate such a study; and

WHEREAS, a $200,000 Reconnaissance Study would be the first step in the process of conducting a much more detailed study assuming there is Federal interest in pursuing the matter further;

NOW, THEREFORE:

BE IT RESOLVED that the UCWCB requests that Arkansas’ 4th District Congressman Mike Ross and U.S. Senators from Arkansas Blanche Lincoln and Mark Pryor support, through authorization and funding, a Reconnaissance Study, initiated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Vicksburg, of the Ouachita River and Tributaries in Arkansas and Louisiana for the purpose of supporting Arkansas and Louisiana efforts to more effectively manage Sparta groundwater resources; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be forwarded to the Louisiana Sparta Commission, Ouachita River Valley Association; and the members of Congress listed above;

Signed this 15th day of July, 2007.

__________________________  ________________________
Robert Reynolds, President       Ken Rudder, Vice President
RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Arkansas State Parks, Recreation & Travel Commission believes that a Reconnaissance Study of the Ouachita River and its tributaries in Arkansas and Louisiana would serve as a vehicle to bring Federal, State, and Local agencies together to study and determine the best utilization of water resources in this region of Louisiana and Arkansas; and

WHEREAS, the Vicksburg District, U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, located in Vicksburg, Mississippi, has responsibility for the development of water and land resources in the Ouachita River Basin and has expressed a capability to initiate such a study; and

WHEREAS, a $200,000 Reconnaissance Study would be the first step in the process of conducting a much more detailed study assuming there is Federal interest in pursuing the matter further;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Arkansas State Parks, Recreation & Travel Commission requests that Senator Blanche Lincoln, Senator Mark Pryor and Congressman Mike Ross support, through authorization and funding, a Reconnaissance Study, initiated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, of the Ouachita River and Tributaries in Arkansas and Louisiana; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Arkansas State Parks, Recreation & Travel Commission asks county and municipal governments and industries within the Ouachita River Basin to also support the authorization and funding of this project; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be forwarded to the Ouachita River Valley Association; the Congressional Delegation listed above; and county and municipal government bodies and industries within the Ouachita River Basin.
This Resolution was adopted by the Arkansas State Parks, Recreation & Travel Commission on the 23rd day of July, 2009, in Springdale, Arkansas.

STATE PARKS, RECREATION AND TRAVEL COMMISSION

__________________________________________________
Danny Ford, Chairman

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND TOURISM

__________________________________________________
Richard W. Davies, Executive Director
A RESOLUTION REQUESTING THAT THE SPARTA REGION'S FEDERAL LEGISLATORS SUPPORT, THROUGH AUTHORIZATION AND FUNDING, A U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS-INITIATED RECONNAISSANCE STUDY OF THE OUACHITA RIVER AND TRIBUTARIES IN ARKANSAS AND LOUISIANA

WHEREAS, water resource needs in North Central Louisiana are stated in Louisiana Revised Statute (LA RS) 38:§3087.131: “The increasing use of water for municipal, industrial, agricultural, recreational, and other purposes in North Central Louisiana is a matter of great public interest; the continued uncontrolled use of groundwater from Sparta and other aquifers may create critical problems”; and the public welfare requires that such water be put to the highest beneficial use; and

WHEREAS, LA RS38:§3087.131 created the Sparta Groundwater Conservation District Commission (Sparta Commission) “to study these matters and how to provide for the efficient administration, conservation, and orderly development of groundwater resources in the parishes of Bienville, Bossier, Caddo, Caldwell, Claiborne, Jackson, LaSalle, Lincoln, Morehouse, Natchitoches, Ouachita, Richland, Sabine, Union, Webster, and Winn”; and

WHEREAS, the Sparta Commission resolved at a regular meeting on January 11, 2007, to advocate for the funding of projects that the Commission endorses as consistent with its statutory purposes; and

WHEREAS, the Sparta Commission recently joined forces with the Ouachita River Valley Association and both organizations believe that a Reconnaissance Study of the Ouachita River and Tributaries in Arkansas and Louisiana would serve as a vehicle to bring Federal, State, and Local agencies together to study and determine the way ahead for water supply in this region of Louisiana and Arkansas; and

WHEREAS, the Vicksburg District, U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, located in Vicksburg, Ms. has responsibility for the development of water and land resources in the Ouachita River Basin and has expressed a capability to initiate such a study; and

WHEREAS, a $200,000 Reconnaissance Study would be the first step in the process of conducting a much more detailed study assuming there is Federal interest in pursuing the matter further;

NOW, THEREFORE:
BE IT RESOLVED that the Sparta Commission requests that the Sparta Region's Federal Legislators, who are Louisiana Senators David Vitter and Mary Landrieu and Representatives John Fleming and Rodney Alexander and Arkansas Senators Mark Pryor and Blanche Lincoln and Representative Michael Ross, support, through authorization and funding, a Reconnaissance Study, initiated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, of the Ouachita River and Tributaries in Arkansas and Louisiana; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Sparta Commission ask parish and municipal governments and industries within its jurisdiction, who draw water from the Sparta Aquifer, and the Union County Water Conservation Board in Arkansas to also support the authorization and funding of this project; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be forwarded to the Ouachita River Valley Association; the Federal Legislators listed above; parish and municipal government bodies and industries within the Sparta region; and the Union County Water Conservation Board.

This Resolution, No. 09-06-18, on motion by Dennis Woodward, seconded by Ted McKinney, was adopted by the Sparta Groundwater Conservation District Commission on the 18th day of June, 2009, by vote [Yeas 15, Nays 0, Abstaining 0, Absent 4], in a duly noticed meeting at which a quorum was present, Whereupon, the Resolution was declared duly adopted.

[Signatures]

Jackie Perritt
Secretary, Sparta Groundwater Conservation District Commission

T. E. 'Gene' Coleman
Chairman, Sparta Groundwater Conservation District Commission

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FACT SHEET # 4
CONSTRUCTION GENERAL

OUACHITA RIVER LEVEES, LA

Authorization
❖ Sec 1 and Sec 6, FCA 28; Sec 5, FCA 36; and Sec 101, FCA 50.

Description and Location
❖ The Ouachita River levee system is located in northeast Louisiana. The levee system is comprised of three separate levee segments totaling 11.5 miles on the west bank at West Monroe, Bawcomville, and Columbia and 105.8 miles of levee on the east bank from Bastrop to Sandy Bayou. The recommended plan consists of rehabilitation of existing levees and raising a portion of the levee to the 1956 project design grade.

FY 2013 FUNDS
Funds in the amount of $1,100,000 could be used to fund level upgrades.

Issues and Other Information
❖ The Ouachita River Levees are critical to the lives and property of the citizens in the Monroe-West Monroe urban area. Bank caving problems continue to plague the area and impact levee stability.
❖
Red-Ouachita River Levees
FACT SHEET # 5a
OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, GENERAL

BLAKELY MOUNTAIN DAM/LAKE OUACHITA, ARKANSAS

Authorization
❖ Flood Control Act of 1944, Section 10 (Public Law 534)

Description and Location
❖ Blakely Mountain Dam/Lake Ouachita is located on the Ouachita River in Garland and Montgomery Counties, AR, west of Hot Springs, AR. The project consists of an earth-filled dam, power plant and lake for hydropower generation, flood control, recreation, water supply, and natural resources management. Storage capacity of the lake is 2,768,000 acre-feet. The power plant has a generating capacity of 75,000 kilowatts. There are 20 campgrounds and recreation areas located on the project. Annual public visitation to the project is 4,500,000.

FY 2013 Funds
❖ President's Budget: Funds of $8,534,000 are being used to continue operations and maintenance with current level of service and campground availability.

❖ Additional Capability: Additional funds of $12,395,000 could be used to acceptable level of service in public use areas ($1,211,000); road paving ($700,000); rehabilitation of power tunnel interior ($2,300,000); riprap upstream side of Blakely Dam ($6,000,000); ADA upgrades ($84,000); electrical system upgrades ($250,000); replace two wastewater plants ($275,000); replace generator bay floor ($75,000); and repair butterfly valve actuator ($1,500,000).

❖ Issues and Other Information: With the FY13 budget amount, levels of service may be further reduced such as cleaning, mowing, ranger patrols, campsite reservations, user fee collection and facility upkeep. Campground availability will be the same as FY 2012.
FACT SHEET # 5b

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, GENERAL

DEGRAY LAKE, ARKANSAS

Authorization


Location and Description

- DeGray Lake is located on the Caddo River in Clark and Hot Spring Counties, AR, northwest of Arkadelphia, AR. The project consists of an earth-fill dam, power plant and lake for hydropower generation, flood control, recreation, water supply, and natural resources management. Storage capacity of the lake is 495,100 acre-feet. The power plant has a generating capacity of 68,000 kilowatts. There is a reregulating pool below the main dam for water supply storage and pumped-storage power generation. There are 18 campgrounds and recreation areas located on the project. Annual public visitation to DeGray Lake is approximately 3,000,000.

FY 2013 Funds

- President’s Budget: Budgeted funds of $6,881,000 are being used to maintain same level of service and campground availability as in FY12.

- Additional Capability: Additional funds in the amount of $5,867,000 could be used to achieve acceptable levels of service in public use areas ($1,267,000); replacement of field office (2,000,000); replacement of sewer plant ($125,000); replacement of shower building at Point Cedar ($225,000); road repair/paving ($1,500,000); road repair/paving Oak Bower access ($500,00); and replace 120/480 distribution breaker panels ($250,000).

Issues and Other Information

- With the FY 13 budget amount, levels of service will be further reduced such as cleaning, mowing, ranger patrols, campsite reservations, user fee collection and facility upkeep. Campground availability will be the same as FY 2012.
FACT SHEET # 5c
OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, GENERAL

NARROWS DAM/ LAKE GREESON, ARKANSAS

Authorization
❖ Flood Control Act of 1944 (Public Law 534).

Location and Description
❖ Narrows Dam/Lake Greeson is located on the Little Missouri River in Pike County, AR, north of Murfreesboro, AR. The project consists of a concrete dam, power plant and lake for hydropower generation, flood control, recreation, water supply, and natural resources management. Storage capacity of the lake is 407,000 acre-feet. The power plant has a generating capacity of 25,500 kilowatts. There are 16 campgrounds and recreation areas on the project. Annual public visitation to the project is approximately 2,000,000.

FY 2013 Funds
❖ President's Budget: Funds of $4,659,000 are being used to continue routine operations and maintenance at the same level of service and campground availability as in FY12.

❖ Additional Capability: Additional funds in the amount of $1,982,000 could be used to achieve acceptable level of services in public use areas ($532,000); for modernization of Bear Creek campground ($700,000); for rehabilitation of 11 shower buildings ($550,000); and to rehabilitate transformer oil containment ($200,000).

Issues and Other Information
❖ With the FY 13 budget amount, levels of service may be further reduced such as cleaning, mowing, ranger patrols, campsite reservations, user fee collection and facility upkeep. Campground availability will be the same as FY 2012.
FACT SHEET # 6

BANK STABILIZATION ON THE OUACHITA AND BLACK RIVERS, AR AND LA FROM MILE 0 ON THE BLACK RIVER TO MILE 460 ON THE OUACHITA RIVER AT THE OUTLET OF REMMEL DAM NEAR HOT SPRINGS, AR

Bank stabilization measures were not authorized as part of the navigation project and consequently bank caving is adversely affecting navigation and the Ouachita River Levees. Currently, bank caving is into the toe of the levee in one or more locations, despite several levee setbacks. In recent years, there has been a noticeable increase in the number of areas of bank caving along the river. This bank caving activity threatens the flood control mission of the project (levee system) and endangers many public and private roads, structures, and utilities along the project. Additionally, the deposition of slides internal into the project decreases water quality and causes additional dredging to maintain the minimum navigation channel.

The Vicksburg District completed a report entitled "Ouachita-Black River Bank Stabilization, AR and LA Status Report" in 2003 that identified 221 bank caving areas. All the areas that were identified were prioritized according to the area endangered by the bank caving. Twenty-two of the areas were identified as endangering the integrity of the levee itself. All of these areas are shown on the following two maps.

The Corps of Engineers report concluded that bank stabilization measures for the Ouachita-Black River System are needed to provide projection for levees and public resources reduce maintenance costs and improve water quality for the Ouachita-Black River.

The Ouachita River Valley Association strongly recommends that action be taken to authorize the Corps of Engineers, through an appropriate authorizing document, the authority to design and construct bank stabilization measures, at full Federal expense, along the entire reach of the Ouachita and Black Rivers, from mile 0 to mile 460 at the outlet of Remmel Dam near Hot Springs, AR. It is believed the most logical means to accomplish this is to add bank stabilization as a project purpose to the Ouachita and Black River, AR and LA, Navigation Project. The proposed WRDA language follows:

OUACHITA AND BLACK RIVERS, ARKANSAS AND LOUISIANA - (A) IN GENERAL - the project for Ouachita and Black Rivers, Arkansas and Louisiana, authorized in Rivers and Harbors Act of 1950, as amended by Rivers and Harbors Act of 1960, is further amended by adding bank stabilization from mile 0 on the Black River, Louisiana, to mile 460 on the Ouachita River, Arkansas, as a project purpose, to be accomplished at full federal expense. The existing navigation project is otherwise unaltered.
Ouachita River Bank Stabilization
Bank Caving Sites in Arkansas
FACT SHEET # 7

OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE, GENERAL
OUACHITA–BLACK RIVERS NAVIGATION PROJECT,
RED RIVER TO CAMDEN, AR

Proposal

- An amendment to add navigation from River Mile 41.5 on the Black River, LA at the mouth of Little River, 14,000 feet upstream on Little River, as a project feature of the Ouachita-Black River Navigation Project.

Authorization

- River and Harbor Act of 15 May 1950 (S. D./117/81/1) as modified by the River and Harbor Act of 14 July 1960 (S. D./112/86/2)

Purpose

- Navigation

Location and Description

- The Ouachita-Black Rivers, Arkansas and Louisiana, Navigation Project is a navigation channel on the Red, Black and Ouachita Rivers extending 382 miles from Old River to Camden, AR. The project consists of four locks and dams and provides a channel with minimum depth of 9 feet, a minimum bottom width of 100 feet and a minimum radius of 1,000 feet in channel bends. The project also includes the diversion of Catahoula Lake near Jonesville, LA for ecological reasons.

Description of Problem

- 1) The problem area consists of the first 14,000 feet of Little River upstream of the mouth where it enters the Black River. Backwater during high stages from the Ouachita-Black Rivers is causing sedimentation of river sands in this portion of the Little River channel. Low water occurs in this reach two-three times annually causing shippers to “light load” barges which greatly reduces the efficiency of waterborne transportation. Approximately 54 million gallons of gasoline and 39.2 million gallons of diesel fuel are moved up Little River annually to the fuel terminal at Archie, LA, located 9 miles upstream from the Black River. This volume represents approximately 11,000 truck loads. These products are distributed to approximately 15 parishes and counties in the 130 mile service area—one of the major agricultural producing areas of the region. Farmers in the area are greatly impacted as these low water periods occur both during the planting and harvesting seasons. Jobbers have to travel great distances to obtain fuel incurring additional transportation cost and are faced with having to pay higher fuel prices.
2) As a more severe example, the fuel terminal at Archie, LA was shut down from mid-April to mid-October during 2010 due to inadequate channel depth in the lower 14,000 feet of Little River. This sediment deposition resulted from the unusual high river stages that occurred during late 2009 and early 2010. The shutdown resulted in a loss of approximately 60 million gallons of fuel that would have been handled through the Archie terminal. Customers had to travel an additional 60-150 miles to obtain fuel incurring not only increased transportation cost but often having to pay more for fuel. It is estimated by industry officials that this resulted in increased consumer fuel costs of about $1.5 million for the lost volume normally handled by the Archie terminal (based on an increase of 2.5 cents per gallon of fuel). Additionally, the owner of the fuel terminal incurred dredging and other associated costs of approximately $850,000 to have the channel constructed back to navigable depths. Maps showing the location of the dredging and the Archie, LA terminal are attached.

Proposed Action

The Ouachita River Valley Association strongly recommends that action be taken, thorough an appropriate document that would provide authorization for the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers to dredge the first 14,000 feet of Little River. It is believed that the most logical means to accomplish this is to add this portion of Little River as a project feature of the Ouachita-Black Rivers Navigation Project. The proposed language follows:

(1) OUACHITA AND BLACK RIVERS, ARKANSAS AND LOUISIANA- (A) IN GENERAL - the project for Ouachita and Black Rivers, Arkansas and Louisiana, authorized in Rivers and Harbors Act of 1950, as amended by Rivers and Harbors Act of 1960, is further amended by adding navigation from mile 41.5 on the Black River, Louisiana, at the mouth of Little River, 14,000 feet upstream on Little River, as a project feature, to be accomplished at full federal expense. The existing navigation project is otherwise unaltered.
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
MISSISSIPPI RIVER COMMISSION, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
VICKSBURG, MISSISSIPPI 39181-0080

October 15, 2012

Executive Office

Mr. William B. Hobgood
Executive Director
Ouachita River Valley Association
3 Hayfield Road
Vicksburg, Mississippi 39183

Dear Mr. Hobgood:

Thank you for your statement on behalf of the Ouachita River Valley Association before the Mississippi River Commission during the public meeting held in Lake Village, Arkansas, on August 22, 2012.

The Commission understands your concern about future funding of the Ouachita-Black Navigation project, and we appreciate your efforts to support funding for the navigation system. As funding becomes available, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps), Vicksburg District, will prioritize dredging to the authorized navigation channel, continue to manage lock operations and maintenance, and will continue to work toward constructing stoplog slots at the Thatcher Lock.

The Commission appreciates your concern regarding operating hours of locks on the Ouachita River. In response to constrained funding and continued decline in the overall condition of navigation infrastructure, the Corps has developed nationally consistent levels of service for locks and dams. Operating hours at locks will be based on the number of lockages provided. Only locks with more than 1000 commercial lockages annually will be operated 24 hours a day year-long. Locks with less than 1000 commercial lockages will be operated for reduced periods of time on a sliding scale based on the number of lockages. The hours of operation and implementation on the Ouachita-Black waterway were coordinated with stakeholders in order to minimize the impacts.
The Corps will continue to investigate possible means to address the bank stabilization issues within the bounds of our authorities and funding. All four of the rehabilitation sites along the Ouachita River which were funded under the PL 84-99 are essentially complete. The Commission recognizes the importance of the navigation system to the economy of the Ouachita River Basin and appreciates your support.

The Commission understands your interest in the Little River tributary being incorporated into the authorized Ouachita-Black River system. Without authorization and funding, the Vicksburg District cannot add Little River to the dredging schedule. The Corps will respond to any Congressional requests to address the addition of Little River to the currently authorized project.

Concerning gravel surfacing on the Ouachita River Levees, the Vicksburg District will work with the Tenas Basin Levee District in its ongoing efforts to maintain the Ouachita River Levees to ensure the authorized level of protection is maintained. Ongoing and future levee construction efforts will be coordinated with the Levee District to ensure appropriate use of allocated funds to maximize authorized risk reduction measures.

The Commission recognizes the importance of funding operation and maintenance at the three Arkansas Lakes, and we appreciate your efforts to support funding for these projects.

The Commission appreciates your comments and your support for the funding of a reconnaissance study for the Ouachita River Watershed. We look forward to hearing from you at future public meetings.

Sincerely,

John W. Peabody
Major General, U.S. Army
President, Mississippi
River Commission