

Beardstown Marina Mile 88 Project

PROJECT GOALS

The Project Goals reflect the need for the main project initiative of dredging the access channel between the Illinois River and the Beardstown Marina. The goals also provide information as to how the overall Project may provide beneficial impacts to the City of Beardstown, the surrounding region, and the State of Illinois.

1. First Responder Access

Currently, first responders have two access points to the Illinois River when required to retrieve sick and/or injured personnel from tow boats, recreational and/or commercial boat traffic which may include search and rescue activities. One access point is a gravel ramp which belongs to a local river tug service in Beardstown. The other access point is on the opposite side of the Illinois River in Schuyler County which is a 6 mile trip (one-way).

2. Environmental Impacts

Asian carp have been in the Illinois River since the 1990's. By the year 2000, they started to reproduce rapidly. The fish can spawn four times each year. The Atlantic Capes Protein Plant, located in Beardstown, has provided an opportunity to assist in removal of this invasive species from the Illinois River ecosystem. The plant has also created jobs in the area which result in economic impacts. Improved access to the Illinois River would allow easier access for commercial fishermen.

3. Economic Impacts

New revenue for the City of Beardstown and the surrounding region could be realized as a result of completing the project initiatives identified in the overall Project (i.e., sales tax and motor fuel taxes). In addition, users of the Marina facilities (camp ground, gas dock, boat ramps and slips, etc.) may frequent numerous other businesses including restaurants, boat shops, grocery stores, gas stations, and other tourism locations in the surrounding region. Re-establishing boat access to the Illinois River has the potential to increase the number of commercial fishermen to harvest Asian carp once reliable boat access is available. This provides both an economic and environmental benefit simultaneously to the City of Beardstown and the surrounding region.

4. Tourism and Recreation

Residents of the City of Beardstown and the surrounding region, along with out-of-state tourists, may utilize the Illinois River in greater numbers for wildlife watching, hunting, fishing and water sports activities as the Beardstown Marina Mile 88 Project is developed. Currently in Cass County there are 798 registered boaters, 74 commercial fishing licenses and 1,075 fishing licenses (as of 06/19/2018).

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PROJECT INITIATIVES

Main project initiative

- **Dredging the access channel between Illinois River and Beardstown Marina**

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Project Information Report (PIR) Sid Simpson Flood Control Project – Approved

- The U. S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) has approved maintenance work near the Beardstown Marina access channel. The material dredged from this area will benefit the Beardstown Marina Mile 88 project. It should leave less channel area needing dredged by the Beardstown Harbor Committee main project dredging initiative.

Open Space Lands Acquisition and Development (OSLAD) Grant – Approved

- River viewing stand/fishing dock (ADA accessible)
- Walking path around the Marina
- Campground (7 sites, with 1 site ADA accessible) with water/electric hook-ups
- Restrooms to include showers (ADA accessible) for Marina and campground patrons
- Electrical Upgrades
- Playground area with Picnic Pavilion
- Kayak Dock and Launch

Additional funding opportunities being pursued for these project initiatives:

- Fuel dock at the Marina for boaters
- Boat wash station
- Business advertising sign board at the Marina
- Kiosk at the Marina to allow patrons to pay parking, camping, and/or boat launching fees
- High water boat launching ramp
- Paving new parking area created at the Marina with the dredged access channel material
- Docks alongside the current boat launching ramps
- Docks and boat slips for short- and long-term boat parking and fire/rescue
- Fixed telescope at the Marina river viewing stand/fishing dock for eagle watching and wildlife viewing

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