

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
GREAT LAKES AND MISSISSIPPI RIVER
INTERBASIN STUDY (GLMRIS)
BRANDON ROAD DRAFT REPORT
PUBLIC MEETING

District Assembly Room
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
New Orleans District
Headquarters Office
7400 Leake Avenue
New Orleans, Louisiana

1:00 p.m.

Tuesday,

December 5, 2017

USACE PANEL:

COL CRAIG BAUMGARTNER

DENA ABOU-EL-SEOUD

SUSANNE DAVIS

TOM HEINOLD

ANDREW LEICHTY

JEFF ZUERCHER

ATTENDEES :**ANGELA AYERS****LARRY BARBISH****THOMAS BETHUNE****HARRISON CRABTREE****JUSTIN CROSSIE****MICHAEL EBY****GAREY FORSTER****ROBERT HIRSCHFELD****ALFRED HOUSE****VAUGHN McDANIEL****LYNN MUENCH****PATRICK MORTON****SPENCER MURPHY****MATT ROTA****JIM STARK****JAY VICKNAIR**

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P R O C E E D I N G S

(1:01 p.m.)

1
2
3 MR. ZUERCHER: Good afternoon,
4 everyone. I'd like to welcome you to the GLMRIS
5 Brandon Road public meeting here in New Orleans.
6 Thank you all for coming.

7 Just a quick reminder: The exit is to
8 our back, should anything occur. Restrooms are
9 out and around by the elevators if you need them,
10 and anything else, just ask anybody with a Corps
11 employee badge; they'd be happy to help you.

12 I'm Jeff Zuercher. I am the GLMRIS
13 program manager, and I'd like to introduce our
14 panel that we have here today. We have COL
15 Baumgartner from the Rock Island District; Andrew
16 Leichty, the project manager for Brandon Road;
17 Sue Davis, our planner; and Dena Abou, our
18 economist; and Tom, who is the acting chief of
19 operations in the Rock Island District.

20 We're very happy and excited to have
21 everyone here today. The GLMRIS Brandon Road
22 team has been working really hard on this report

1 and preparing for today's meeting.

2 The GLMRIS program overall encompasses
3 several different aspects. We have two focus
4 areas: Focus area one is on the Chicago Area
5 Waterway System, and that is the main connection
6 between the Great Lakes and the Mississippi River
7 basin. And then we have focus area two, which is
8 all of the other connections along the basin that
9 are usually temporary in nature. And we're
10 working on looking at all of those and working on
11 solutions for those temporary ones.

12 GLMRIS-Brandon Road is part of focus
13 area one; it is one aspect of looking at the CAWS
14 and closing the aquatic nuisance species pathway
15 between the two basins. We also have our second
16 study that is possible in the future, which is
17 looking at the two-way solution of keeping
18 aquatic nuisance species from traveling through
19 the two basins.

20 Today we are going to have a short
21 presentation on the TSP and what has been
22 selected as that, and through the report --

1 hopefully all of you have had a chance to read
2 through the hundreds, if not thousands of pages
3 of documents.

4 We are on Facebook Live today. We
5 also have an audience on the phone, as you're
6 hearing people beep in. So when it is your turn,
7 when we ask you to come up, please do speak
8 loudly and clearly. We appreciate that for all
9 those that are online.

10 I'd like to take this time now to just
11 have COL Baumgartner come up and give a few
12 introductory remarks.

13 COL BAUMGARTNER: Okay. Well,
14 everybody, thanks for joining us today. I always
15 like to start off by letting everybody know that
16 throughout my life I've actually grown up on the
17 river. I live on the Mississippi River right
18 now, matter of fact, and also grew up and still
19 do today go to the Great Lakes very frequently,
20 particularly Lake Ontario, Lake Erie, as I grew
21 up in upstate New York.

22 So I definitely value water as its

1 most precious resources that it is. I just
2 wanted to thank all of you for taking the time to
3 join for what is the most critical part of our
4 study process; it's gathering public comment.

5 This is the fourth public meeting, all
6 of which have significant importance to the
7 United States Army Corps of Engineers, as we
8 share our Tentatively Selected Plan for the
9 Brandon Road study.

10 As you -- most of you know, we've had
11 three sessions leading us to today -- public
12 sessions to date. We had a public session in
13 Chicago, Illinois; Muskegon, Michigan; and also
14 Joliet, Illinois. So great to be here in New
15 Orleans.

16 Today we brought together, as Jeff
17 already mentioned, our panel of subject-matter
18 experts, in order to inform you about the Corps'
19 Tentatively Selected Plan. Hopefully you're
20 aware that the report is available for review and
21 has been since early August. It will remain
22 available for public review and comment until 8

1 December.

2 Addressing the spread of Asian carp
3 and other aquatic nuisance species is definitely
4 a shared responsibility, and we rely very heavily
5 on our federal, state, and local partners, as
6 well as we have to recognize we have an
7 international obligation with our neighbors to
8 the north in Canada.

9 These entities and many more have been
10 working very diligently as part of the Asian Carp
11 Regional Coordinating Committee and many other
12 venues as we come together, and I'm certain proud
13 of the Corps of Engineers and our collective
14 partnerships to get where we are today.

15 After the release of the Great Lakes
16 Mississippi River Interbasin Study report, the
17 assistant secretary of the Army of Civil Works
18 directed the Corps to evaluate potential options
19 and technologies at the Brandon Road lock and
20 dam, to prevent, to the maximum extent possible,
21 the upstream transfer of aquatic nuisance species
22 from the Mississippi River basin to the Great

1 Lakes basin.

2 But in doing that, we also recognize
3 that we are doing this while minimizing any
4 potential impacts to waterway uses and users.

5 It should be noted that the
6 Tentatively Selected Plan is just that; it is
7 tentative. We value very much the input from the
8 collective all, and there are many steps as we
9 move forward together between this Tentatively
10 Selected Plan and the public comment period, and
11 of course, and the Corps Chief's Report that's
12 planned for August of 2019.

13 I wanted to thank you again, and we
14 very much look forward to your invaluable comment
15 and input that you provide. I will end by
16 thanking the collective teams that have gathered
17 here today that brought this meeting together.

18 There's been a lot of hard work behind
19 the scenes, a lot of coordination in order to
20 make this day happen, and thank you again for
21 your attendance, and I look forward to speaking
22 with you individually as time permits and

1 certainly after we're done today.

2 So thank you very much.

3 MR. LEICHTY: All right again, my name
4 is Andrew Leichty, project manager for the
5 Brandon Road study, and thank you all for coming
6 here today and participating and providing
7 comments.

8 So what I'm going to do is go through
9 some slides here that show the plan that we've
10 selected and talk about it a little bit, and then
11 we're going to open it up for comments, and Jeff
12 will set the ground rules for that in a moment.

13 So that's the main purpose for us
14 being here, so I'll try to get through this, and
15 then after our comment period is over here today,
16 we will have our subject-matter experts that are
17 up here in front here to answer questions later
18 after the comment period is over.

19 And if possible, for those on the
20 phone that are listening in, if you could please
21 mute your phone during the presentation. Thank
22 you.

1 So first off, as COL Baumgartner
2 mentioned, we were directed by the Assistant
3 Secretary of the Army's Office to proceed with
4 the study following the GLMRIS report that was
5 completed in 2014.

6 So, again, looking for a solution at
7 Brandon Road, Brandon Road was identified in
8 three out of eight of the alternatives in the
9 GLMRIS report, and one of the key features for
10 Brandon Road is that it's a control point down
11 here in the lower Chicago Area Waterway System --
12 before it gets into the Chicago Area Waterway
13 System, a control point before you branch out.
14 So it's a key point geographically, and it's also
15 a key structure because it's a high-head dam.
16 We'll talk about that again here in a moment.

17 So what we're looking at is the
18 opportunity to reduce the risk of one-way
19 transfer of aquatic nuisance species. As Jeff
20 mentioned, there's other studies that will be
21 following on to look at the two-way transfer, but
22 for this purpose and time here right now, we're

1 looking at something that we can proactively
2 implement for one-way transfer.

3 The aquatic nuisance species of
4 concern that the study was formulated on was
5 those that are swimmers, which most people are
6 familiar with the Asian carp, and then there's
7 floaters, which would be floating eggs or larval
8 fish, and then hitchhikers.

9 So why Brandon Road? Again, as we saw
10 on the map two slides previously, geographically
11 it's downstream of the Chicago Area Waterway
12 system before you get up in there to where it
13 branches out into many other channels and
14 waterways.

15 But also the dam here, it's a high-
16 head dam, so even during a high flood event,
17 there's at least 24 foot of head at the dam, so
18 there is no opportunity for fish to swim over or
19 around this structure, even during floods.

20 So in other parts of the country where
21 we have some lower dams, these fish do migrate
22 upstream during flood events because they're able

1 to get around those obstructions, or over them.
2 But that would not happen here at Brandon Road.

3 So that leaves the lock chamber itself
4 as the main pathway for aquatic nuisance species.
5 So we have an opportunity here to implement
6 control measures to prevent that passage through
7 this lock, and so that was why it was also
8 selected in three out of eight alternatives in
9 the GLMRIS report.

10 It's also relevant as we did the
11 scoping meetings that we heard back from the
12 public and others that, you know, that this is a
13 key location to implement features, and it's also
14 responsive and also provides us a layer of
15 defense.

16 So upstream of Brandon Road there's a
17 Romeoville electric barrier, which is in place
18 that the Chicago District Corps operates. And so
19 that feature is there; it's on now and will
20 continue to be. But this would be in tandem with
21 that, so we're adding a layer of defense.

22 We'll get to in a moment there's no

1 one specific silver bullet or one thing that's
2 going to prevent the aquatic nuisance species, so
3 when we have multiple tools that we want to be
4 able to use to have a layered defense.

5 Our team has relied heavily on others,
6 other agencies -- federal agencies and partners,
7 state agencies, and universities and other NGOs,
8 to provide us with the best available information
9 to formulate our report and to put it together.

10 And many of these same agencies and
11 groups have been working together for a long
12 time, even before the study was started in the
13 fight against aquatic nuisance species and also
14 Asian carp.

15 So we've relied heavily on best
16 available information and data and input from
17 these groups, and we will continue so, and we
18 will also need to rely on this partnership as we
19 implement our (if you could mute your phone
20 please) -- we will rely heavily on our partners
21 as part of the solution to implement any of our
22 plans, and I'll talk a little bit more about that

1 here later.

2 So part of formulating our plan, we
3 know that we have key resources here in North
4 America that we want to protect, and as the Corps
5 of Engineers, that's our responsibility or duty
6 to safeguard our navigation and ecosystems, our
7 water resources and recreation.

8 So the Great Lakes and Mississippi
9 River basin are key resources for America, and so
10 when we formulate our plan, we want to make sure
11 that we are doing our best to take care and
12 protect our natural resources that we have.

13 Some of the key features with the
14 Brandon Road, it's highly utilized for commercial
15 navigation, and we have 11 million tons of cargo
16 annually, and it has \$319 million in
17 transportation savings benefits through that
18 lock.

19 And the Great Lakes basin has over 63
20 million recreational fishing trips per year. It
21 has over 1.3 billion in net economic value, and
22 the commercial fishing adds \$20 million in

1 revenue, and it's also 20 percent of the surface
2 fresh water resources in the world are located in
3 the Great Lakes.

4 So, again, what are we trying to
5 protect? Again, it's those resources there in
6 the Great Lakes. I mentioned that 20 percent of
7 the world's fresh water -- surface water is right
8 there in the Great Lakes. That's a treasure.

9 There's over 5,000 tributaries that
10 come into the Great Lakes, and 41 percent of the
11 basin is governed by Canada, so it would have an
12 international treasure here of water in the Great
13 Lakes.

14 There's over 60 species that are
15 special status and 10 that are endangered in the
16 Great Lakes, and we also support a 1.8 billion
17 Great Lakes Legacy Act to -- which provides
18 resources to protect the Great Lakes through
19 ecosystem and environmental programs.

20 So the consequences of establishment:
21 So we do know that where Asian carp are
22 established, they do impact the native species by

1 a percentage of mass. Comparing the Asian carp
2 to the native species that are there, the Asian
3 carp are by far the larger mass. They outcompete
4 the native species at the bottom of the food
5 chain for eating plankton and so forth, so they
6 do take over in mass.

7 And we also have seen issues with
8 boating in these areas, where they do impact
9 boaters, as you've seen here in the picture. You
10 can see that they do jump out of the water, and
11 so that impacts boating and recreational use as
12 well.

13 So there are consequences for these
14 species. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric
15 Administration did do a model on Lake Erie; it
16 was completed last year. And the results of that
17 modeling indicated that for Lake Erie there is
18 suitable habitat there for the Asian carp to be
19 established and consume up to over 10 to 34
20 percent of the biomass of fish in the lake.

21 So that was for Lake Erie. They are
22 doing ongoing modeling for the other lakes as

1 well, and that information will be coming out for
2 all them soon.

3 So the types of controls that we
4 looked at for our study, what could we implement
5 at Brandon Road? So the main feature that we do
6 have at Brandon Road is an engineered channel.

7 The engineered channel would provide
8 us with a platform to install structural measures
9 and other technologies that are under research
10 and development now that are not ready to
11 implemented yet, but it provides a platform to
12 spiral in new technologies in the future but also
13 enhance the technologies that we have proposed to
14 be implemented, such as complex noise.

15 The engineered channel would allow for
16 that complex noise to be enhanced and to bounce
17 the sound and vibrations off the engineered
18 channel walls to disrupt or disturb fish, to
19 deter them from entering the channel.

20 And also the electric barrier is one
21 of the control technologies that we have. It's
22 already implemented at Romeoville. And so we're

1 looking at how to implement that here in a little
2 bit different environment.

3 But the engineered channel is a key
4 aspect of that, providing that platform to
5 install that and an attempt to control that
6 electric field, where it's located at, and
7 maintain it there.

8 Also the engineered channel provides
9 for better monitoring and response, so if we need
10 to sweep that area or remove fish, we have the
11 ability there to have concrete walls without
12 pockets or voids in the bottom, so that provides
13 us a better ability to monitor that area.

14 The flushing lock is designed for
15 floaters, so that would be, again, the eggs and
16 the larval fish. The flushing lock concept works
17 by utilizing the upstream pool -- that's above
18 the upper gate -- and allow that water to flow
19 through the lock and move anything that would be
20 in the lock chamber that's floating, would be
21 pushed on downstream through the lower lock gate
22 while it is open.

1 We do have also water jets, so tests
2 have shown that some fish can be entrained
3 between the barges, between the hull and the rake
4 area, and also even along the sides, so we
5 proposed using water jets to dislodge those fish
6 that would be in between the barges, to move them
7 out and get them to move back in downstream
8 before entering in the engineered channel.

9 So with those control measures we then
10 formulated multiple alternatives. So we have
11 three technological alternatives and then a
12 nonstructural alternative, a do what we call
13 sometimes a do-nothing or no-new-action
14 alternative, and then lock closure.

15 So first off, with the no-new-action
16 alternative, that was a key alternative with any
17 planning measure you set. You know, if we did
18 nothing, what's going to happen in the future.
19 And so that determines your baseline.

20 So one key part of that that is
21 ongoing now is the electric barrier at Romeoville
22 will continue to operate. It's not a part of

1 this project; that's separate. So that
2 continues.

3 And right now there's funding for the
4 State of Illinois, through the Fish & Wildlife,
5 to do monitoring and response as well as
6 commercial fishing. So those are key aspects of
7 what's happening now.

8 Our nonstructural alternative would
9 have an enhanced monitoring and fishing removal
10 and would also include additional public
11 education and outreach and boat ramps to provide
12 those conducting the monitoring and response
13 quicker access to the river to conduct those
14 activities and would continue the overfishing or
15 commercial fishing of the population of fish
16 downstream of Brandon Road.

17 That's a very key component of our
18 plan that's the nonstructural alternative,
19 removing the fish from downstream of Brandon Road
20 to keep the population low, so as a layer of
21 defense, we're going to propose the structural
22 measures, but we also want to use our

1 nonstructural measures so that they're all
2 working in tandem together. Again, no one
3 solution is going to work all by itself.

4 The technology alternatives: We have
5 the electric barrier by itself. Then we have
6 complex noise and then the electric barrier and
7 complex noise combination.

8 So we looked at those alternatives on
9 the last slide, and this is the evaluation
10 criteria that we used to evaluate them. First
11 off, the effectiveness: How effective was that
12 alternative at preventing the passage of aquatic
13 nuisance species.

14 And then the important thing, again,
15 is life safety: What is the safety risk involved
16 with the implementation of those measures, the
17 impacts to navigation, the costs; the costs of
18 construction, operations, and rehabilitation and
19 repair, and does it provide for a layered defense
20 alternative.

21 So the plan that was selected was the
22 electric barrier with complex noise, a technical

1 alternative combination. And it was selected
2 because it is the most effective alternative at
3 preventing the upstream passage of aquatic
4 nuisance species, including Asian carp, while at
5 the same time maintaining navigation.

6 So I guess back to what our goal was
7 again, direction from the ASA's office, was to
8 provide a recommendation on how to prevent the
9 upstream transfer of aquatic nuisance species
10 while maintaining -- while reducing impacts to
11 navigation users and waterway users.

12 So that's what this one provides, and,
13 again, effectiveness - at the most effective at
14 preventing that transfer while maintaining
15 navigation.

16 The cost for this alternative are 275
17 million for implementation of the structural
18 measures. There would be an \$8.2 million
19 operating cost, and then there's also \$11.3
20 million per year operating cost for the
21 nonstructural measure. The estimated time to
22 construct this would be five years, upon funding.

1 So implementation of this plan, a key
2 part of implementing would be working with the US
3 Coast Guard and the navigation industry as we put
4 these control technologies in place; working to
5 maximize the effectiveness.

6 So right now with the electric barrier
7 and complex noise alternative, how we would
8 operate that right now is when vessels are
9 approaching the engineered channel or in the
10 engineered channel or lock, the electric barrier
11 would be off, but then complex noise would be on
12 as the deterrent to keep the fish from moving
13 through the engineered channel.

14 Working through the operations of this
15 as it comes online, and the Coast Guard will have
16 to provide a recommendation on the navigation
17 area or any rules or regulations that would need
18 to be implemented for safety regarding electric
19 barriers.

20 So when we get that on, there will
21 have to be field testing after it's constructed,
22 to determine what actions need to be taken for

1 safety.

2 The study timeline: So right now
3 we're in the public comment phase, in the middle
4 of our overall study, so we have completed --
5 first off, the public scoping was done in late
6 fall/winter of 2014. Then in 2015 we started the
7 alternative formulation phase.

8 We completed the Tentatively Selected
9 Plan a year ago with approval from our
10 headquarters, and then we released the study here
11 in August for public comment and review.

12 We're going to take these public
13 comments that we got from you and also the
14 technical analysis that is ongoing. We've had
15 the agency technical review, which is technical
16 specialists from around the Corps who are not
17 part of the team, and we have contracted out an
18 independent external peer review, which is
19 ongoing right now, be wrapping up in January.

20 And we'll take their feedback and the
21 feedback from others and the public comment and
22 look at that and say, Well, what do we need to do

1 going forward in the feasibility? What areas do
2 we need to do further analysis on? What gaps do
3 we have?

4 So the next step, part four, the
5 feasibility analysis, is the next phase coming
6 up. Key dates there for that phase, we expect to
7 have that completed in February of 2019, which
8 will culminate in a senior leaders review at our
9 Corps headquarters.

10 So we'll have a final report, and
11 it'll get to our headquarters for a review, and
12 then we'll determine if it's ready to go for
13 public review again.

14 So sometime there in early 2019 the
15 final report will come out for state and agency
16 and public review, for final comment. And then
17 at that time it gets converted to a Chief's
18 Report, which is scheduled to be August of 2019.

19 This slide here shows the timeline
20 combining the planning phase, the five phases of
21 planning, and then the assumption or estimated
22 construction timeline. So completing the Chief's

1 Report in August of 2019, we're assuming that we
2 could get authorization and appropriation of
3 funds in the fall of 2020. We could then begin
4 engineering and design to prepare for
5 construction.

6 The nonstructural measure will be
7 implemented right away, upon appropriation, and
8 then we would need about three years before we
9 could begin that construction and complete
10 construction in 2025.

11 So as always, we welcome your comments
12 and your feedback. You can go to the GLMRIS
13 website, where we have information about our
14 report, and the report is there for viewing and
15 download. You can enter comments there as well.

16 You can keep in touch with us through
17 Facebook and Twitter, as well as email, so we
18 appreciate everybody coming out today and also
19 participating through the website and sending us
20 comments through mail.

21 And now I will turn it over to Jeff to
22 begin the comment period.

1 MR. ZUERCHER: Thank you, Andy.

2 And thanks for being here to listen to
3 that presentation. I would also like to extend
4 thanks to some of our congressional
5 representation that is here today. We have
6 Michael Eby from Senator Cassidy's office; Jay
7 Vicknair from Senator Kennedy's office; and
8 Justin Crossie from Congressman Steve Scalise's
9 office.

10 Thank you for being here. We
11 appreciate your presence.

12 At this time what we'd like to do is
13 we'd like to take a few minutes to take any
14 clarifying questions that the audience may have
15 regarding Andy's presentation.

16 Once we've taken a few -- a couple of
17 questions regarding that, then we'll move into
18 our comment period, and I will give a further
19 explanation of how we're going to go through the
20 comments.

21 So if anyone has a clarifying question
22 they'd like to ask, I open the floor for that

1 now.

2 Yes, sir, in the back.

3 AUDIENCE: What do you guys mean by
4 complex noise?

5 MR. LEICHTY: Okay. So the complex
6 noise is just a variation in sounds, so right now
7 we have looked at putting underwater speakers in
8 that can produce various sounds and noises that
9 would deter the fish.

10 So the fish are affected by vibrations
11 and sound waves in the water, and specifically
12 some of you have noticed possibly when boat
13 motors or engines go through the water, they
14 get -- the props produce small air bubbles in the
15 water, and they collapse, and so that produces a
16 sound and vibration, which is what gets them to
17 jump.

18 But primarily the vibration through
19 the water is what is impactful to the Asian carp,
20 and it does impact different species differently,
21 so that is still a lot of research going on on
22 complex noise.

1 COL BAUMGARTNER: I'll just to that
2 real quick, too, is one of the things Andy talked
3 about in his presentation is about how we very
4 much are relying on our other partners for
5 science, technology, research. In the case of
6 complex noise, the United States Geological
7 Survey, or USGS, is the lead agency that's doing
8 the testing and development, or development and
9 testing of complex noise.

10 And that continues to advance very
11 well, particularly not only have they done model
12 and controlled-environment testing, but they've
13 initiated field testing on that system, too.

14 MS. MUENCH: Andy, you said that there
15 was no chance of flooding in that area, but I
16 thought in the TSP it said there was a 2 percent
17 chance every year for flooding and connection of
18 the waterway.

19 MS. DAVIS: It's a .2 percent chance.

20 MR. LEICHTY: I don't know the
21 frequency of flooding in the area, but I guess
22 in -- there's no chance for upstream passage

1 through or over, around the dam during flooding,
2 during that .2 percent chance of flood, which
3 people refer to as a 500-year flood. There's
4 still 24 foot of head there at the dam.

5 So at that point there would not be
6 any opportunity for fish to get around that
7 structure, even at flood stages.

8 Does that clarify that?

9 MS. MUENCH: Uh-huh. What's the
10 Brandon Road work group?

11 MR. LEICHTY: So that, that was a work
12 group that was different agencies that -- and
13 partners that got together to -- it was pretty
14 much the same group as the Monitoring and
15 Response work group but with the specialized
16 information that we were going back and forth
17 with on Brandon Road. They had a lot of calls
18 with that, and that group got together a lot, so
19 we just called it the Brandon Road work group.

20 It was the -- our partners that helped
21 us with the study, providing us information, and
22 just coordinating that information.

1 MR. ZUERCHER: Yes, sir.

2 AUDIENCE: How much of the overall
3 cost of the engineered channel -- well, put it
4 another way: What is the price tag for the
5 engineered channel?

6 MR. LEICHTY: So your question is what
7 is the overall cost or construction cost just for
8 the engineered channel?

9 AUDIENCE: Yes.

10 MR. LEICHTY: Okay. I guess I'd have
11 to look -- Dena, do you know that offhand?

12 MS. ABOU-EL-SEOUD: If you'd give me
13 one moment, I'll look it up. I do not -- I'm the
14 economist on the study, but I don't remember that
15 offhand, so give me one moment. (Perusing
16 documents.)

17 MR. ZUERCHER: While she's looking
18 that up, why don't we go ahead and take your
19 question. Yes, sir?

20 AUDIENCE: The construction period
21 over four years, how much disruption will that
22 have to navigation for the construction period,

1 and then following completion, how long of a
2 delay do you estimate each tow requiring a crew
3 in that process?

4 MR. LEICHTY: Okay. So first off was
5 the construction period itself, how long will
6 that take, and what are the impacts to the
7 transportation there. So --

8 COL BAUMGARTNER: Andy, real quick,
9 just so they can hear and pick up on it for the
10 record, can you just repeat that question one
11 more time, just so that we're picking up on the
12 speaker?

13 MR. LEICHTY: Again, the question --
14 the first part of the question is what are the
15 impacts during construction to navigation and
16 what are the delays in the timing there and then
17 also what is the delays after -- or during
18 operation? I think that's the two questions.

19 So first off, during construction of
20 the engineered channel and then also the flushing
21 lock, our current estimates are looking at
22 combining the construction of the flushing lock

1 and then part of the engineered channel together.

2 Right now we're looking at a 40-day
3 closure period to implement blasting of the
4 engineered channel bottom and putting in precast
5 panels and also reconfiguring the conduits at the
6 lock itself for the flushing lock.

7 And just to note that's part of what
8 we've estimated so far in the Tentatively
9 Selected Plan, there's again feasibility, and we
10 will do further engineering analysis and cost
11 schedule risk analysis and look at how we can
12 refine that to be more effective and efficient.

13 Right now for the operation phase, the
14 impacts during operation, we do have an average
15 time of about two hours, but our economist -- do
16 you want to say anything else, Dena?

17 MS. ABOU-EL-SEOUD: Yes. So I believe
18 that my part of the question was what is the
19 change in processing time as you get through the
20 lock?

21 At Brandon Road we are looking at a
22 difference in processing time of a little more

1 than 2.5 hours, so that would be the increase.
2 Again, that is attributed to the flushing lock
3 that would be in continuous operation.

4 At this point in the study we've taken
5 a fairly conservative approach of what those
6 flushing requirements would be, and so we looked
7 what the difference would be for a lockage
8 process, to approach the lock, transit the lock,
9 and exit the lock.

10 The delay time comprises the majority
11 of that difference in processing time, and so
12 while our flushing is only about 18 minutes, that
13 increases our delay time a little over 2.4 hours.

14 Did that answer the question? Okay.

15 I also have the -- I will repeat the
16 previous question that I promised an answer to:
17 What is the cost of the engineered channel for
18 the TSP, and that is \$62.3 million estimated at
19 this point.

20 COL BAUMGARTNER: Okay. I just wanted
21 to make sure I add one more thing. Part of that
22 question about during construction and closure

1 time, and Andy talked about, you know, a 40-day,
2 that's for the flushing lock, of course;
3 modifications to the existing lock to get the
4 flushing effect, and also the engineered channel
5 piece.

6 But I just want to make sure I did add
7 that also there will be additional restrictions
8 beyond that 40-day closure window as we complete
9 other phases or aspects of what would be
10 potentially constructed at Brandon Road from a
11 restriction standpoint.

12 MR. ZUERCHER: Final question.

13 AUDIENCE: Other than the electric
14 barrier component, are any of the technologies
15 that are contemplated in the TSP -- are any of
16 them beyond design or testing phase? Are any of
17 them being implemented and used anywhere else, or
18 are they all still somewhat theoretical?

19 COL BAUMGARTNER: So I can jump in on
20 that, and I'll let Andy come in also. So I think
21 what you're getting to is, okay, so what's the
22 degree of confidence do we have in the potential

1 recommended control measures as outlined in the
2 Tentatively Selected Plan? And is there any
3 precedence of its use elsewhere or previously.

4 So specific to the electric barrier,
5 the Corps of Engineers has had an electric
6 barrier at Romeoville, Illinois. It's been
7 operated and maintained by the Chicago District
8 of the United States Army Corps of Engineers for
9 approximately 15 years.

10 And there's been an evolution there
11 onsite that has helped very much in terms of
12 informing our study, so we've learned a lot from
13 over those 15 years about electric barrier
14 operations, how to continue to improve that,
15 improve its effectiveness; also decrease any
16 potential vulnerabilities; adaptive management
17 measures and other things. We take all that
18 feedback, as part and informs our study process.

19 I briefly talked about the complex
20 noise piece. For complex noise, again, that
21 continues to advance. USGS, as the lead agency
22 that's leading those efforts on our behalf, and

1 we're relying very much on them for the testing,
2 and complex noise has been not only tested in
3 controlled environments but also it's in field
4 testing right now and showing positive results at
5 this point.

6 In terms of other measures, there's
7 quite a few other measures we talked about:
8 water jets; for example, we've done field testing
9 of that.

10 And, Sue, I can tell you want to make
11 a few additional comments. I'll let you chime
12 in.

13 MS. DAVIS: Complex noise as a fish
14 deterrent technology has been around for a long
15 time: the discussions that the Colonel has been
16 referencing, the work the USGS has been doing.
17 They've been looking at specifically in a
18 navigation environment and some of the locks and
19 dams on the Upper Mississippi.

20 But as a fish deterrent, complex noise
21 has been used for probably several decades, many
22 times in a mobile setting, where it's used to

1 deter spawning fish, but it has a pretty good
2 track record as a deterrent.

3 MR. HEINOLD: If I could chime in here
4 real quick, too. I'm Tom Heinold. I'm the
5 operations chief acting for Rock Island District.
6 It's my job, I've been charged with delivering a
7 nine-foot navigation channel that's safe and
8 reliable to deliver to the navigation industry.

9 And there was a question before that
10 asked about impacts to navigation during
11 construction. This waterway is in pretty bad
12 need of maintenance and rehabilitation already,
13 and to the extent possible -- and there are a lot
14 of ifs here, depending on authorizations and
15 funding and the timing of all that, but this lock
16 system is due for some major maintenance over the
17 next six to eight years.

18 The lower six locks on this system
19 will need to be closed and dewatered at some
20 point for gate, sill, and anchorage modifications
21 to accept new gates, and we would make every
22 effort possible to do this work concurrently with

1 maintenance that is already needed to get this
2 system back to a reliable state so that it can
3 deliver the economic benefits to this nation that
4 it was designed to do. So we'll make every
5 effort to do that.

6 COL BAUMGARTNER: Okay. So I just
7 want to add one last point. Back to the question
8 about the delay times in terms of processing time
9 and lockage time.

10 The bottom line, I will tell you up
11 front, is as we work and move into what Andy has
12 described as the study schedule, we're going to
13 move in from the Tentatively Selected Plan, of
14 the public comment period, and then we're moving
15 into the feasibility phase.

16 And that's going to be a very critical
17 phase where there's great opportunity for us to
18 work, in this case, with navigation interests and
19 the U.S. Coast Guard, along with the Corps of
20 Engineers, to come together, because ultimately
21 we want to have as much of an efficient system
22 and an effective system as possible.

1 And I think there's a great
2 opportunity for us to come together during the
3 feasibility phase to really take a look at how we
4 can decrease any potential delays.

5 MR. ZUERCHER: All right. Well, thank
6 you for your questions or clarifying questions.
7 The expert panel will be available following our
8 public comment period to answer any further
9 questions that you might have. They will make
10 themselves available for a period of time after
11 we are done here.

12 So let's get on to the public comment
13 period, most of what you're here for. This is an
14 important part.

15 So what we ask is that you limit your
16 comments to three minutes, and to guide you
17 through that, we have a set of slides, and the
18 slides start out green, and then they change to
19 yellow when there's one minute left, and every 15
20 seconds there will be another yellow slide. And
21 finally, when your time is up, it will go to a
22 red slide.

1 At that time we ask that you wrap up
2 your comments, and then if you have further
3 comments that you would like to make, we will
4 invite you back up towards the end.

5 What I'm going to do is I'm going to
6 go through a list of people that have signed up
7 to make comments, and we will have them go first.
8 I'm going to call out three names at a time and
9 ask that you come and sit up here in the front
10 row so that you're ready to speak, and then we
11 won't have to wait for you to get up to the
12 podium.

13 Please speak into the microphone.
14 When the microphone's red, you'll be heard. Be
15 loud and be clear. We need you to state your
16 name, and your first and last name, along with
17 any organization that you represent, and also we
18 need your zip code.

19 In order for this to count as a public
20 comment that we can have in our record, we need
21 you to have your first and last name and your zip
22 code for sure; the organization is optional.

1 So at this time I would like to invite
2 up Angela Ayers, Thomas Bethune, and Robert
3 Hirschfeld.

4 Once we get through this list of
5 people that are here, I will open it up to people
6 on the phone and also people here in the
7 audience.

8 So Angela, go right ahead.

9 MS. AYERS: Thank you. Angela Ayers
10 from Michigan Governor Rick Snyder's office,
11 48909.

12 Governor Snyder appreciates the
13 opportunity to be here today to discuss the
14 importance of Brandon Road lock and dam for
15 protecting the Great Lakes.

16 The invasive carp detection front has
17 continued to advance since 2009. Multiple
18 sampling events in 2015 found invasive carp eggs,
19 larval fish and juveniles, much farther upstream
20 than ever observed before. These data indicate
21 the invasive carp population on the Illinois
22 River system is active and advancing.

1 Today they are actively spawning and
2 colonizing and have been found within nine miles
3 of Lake Michigan. Ignoring these movements may
4 lead to an inaccurate assessment of the risk
5 posed, as well as missing critical windows for
6 action to protect our natural resources and
7 economies.

8 Natural resources are a cornerstone of
9 our pure Michigan way of life and of the regional
10 economies of the entire Great Lakes system.
11 Michigan has over 3,000 miles of Great Lakes
12 coastline, 11,000 inland lakes, and 36,000 miles
13 of rivers and streams that provide for the
14 recreational, esthetic, and commercial activities
15 that serve as the foundation of our tourism
16 economy.

17 Tourism has long been a major sector
18 in Michigan's economy, with visitors spending
19 over \$20 billion and generating an economic
20 impact of about 37 billion in 2014 alone.

21 Invasive carp currently pose the
22 greatest threat to the Great Lakes, Michigan's

1 natural resources, our tourism economy, and the
2 continued economic growth of our entire Great
3 Lakes region.

4 We recognize the significant efforts
5 many agencies have taken to date, with
6 congressional and stakeholder support, to further
7 study Brandon Road. Taking action at Brandon
8 Road is the next important milestone in these
9 efforts.

10 The preferred alternative outlined in
11 the Tentatively Selected Plan is a step in the
12 right direction, offering a combination of
13 solutions to reduce the risk of invasive carp.

14 Michigan supports and applauds aspects
15 of the plan, including an innovative engineered
16 channel. This is a unique opportunity that could
17 serve as a national test bed for invasive species
18 monitoring and control, and the intermittent
19 electric barrier that would only be active in the
20 absence of barge traffic to help alleviate safety
21 concerns.

22 All stakeholders recognize that

1 business as usual is not an option. Governor
2 Snyder supports the TSP and is ready to provide
3 substantial resources to support the operations
4 and maintenance of Brandon Road lock and dam to
5 alleviate impacts to the State of Illinois
6 taxpayers.

7 We urge other Great Lakes states and
8 provinces to join us in providing the support.

9 Thank you.

10 MR. ZUERCHER: Thomas?

11 MR. BETHUNE: Good day. Thomas

12 Bethune on behalf of Blessey Marine Services here
13 in New Orleans and the Texas Waterways Operators
14 Association in Houston, 70123.

15 COL Baumgartner, you mentioned earlier
16 about a shared responsibility, and I believe one
17 of the things that everybody in this room
18 recognizes is the shared responsibility that
19 industry has with the government, both with the
20 Corps of Engineers and Coast Guard.

21 Every major industry group, the TWA
22 included, and every major tank barge operator in

1 here sees a shared responsibility to ensure
2 environmental safety while ensuring economic
3 viability.

4 The two are not mutually exclusive,
5 and they are working together. The nonstructural
6 elements and efforts to contain the Asian carp
7 are working. The fish has not advanced in nearly
8 26 years but by some accounts.

9 Texas is the number-two provider of
10 jobs to the inland tugboat and barge industry,
11 with a total of 210,000 jobs related to waterways
12 and waterway support. This contributes to about
13 \$34 billion of direct economic impact to the
14 Texas economy and about \$400 billion worth of
15 finished goods, petroleum, dry goods, et cetera,
16 through Texas ports and waterways.

17 Annually Louisiana and Texas handle
18 the most waterborne commerce on the inland
19 waterway system, with Illinois ranking third. So
20 why is Texas important? You have to look at
21 everything as the inland waterways as a system.
22 If you affect something upriver, it affects

1 something downriver.

2 If you take the LaGrange lock, for
3 instance, on the Illinois River, there are tens
4 of millions of tons of cargo that move through
5 LaGrange every year. There are cargoes that flow
6 upriver as well as downriver.

7 If you look at the Calcasieu lock on
8 the Intracoastal, the third-ranking state in
9 terms of economic impact at the Calcasieu lock is
10 the State of Illinois. There are collateral
11 effects to altering the flow of goods anywhere
12 you go.

13 It adds stress on additional
14 infrastructure resources, it stresses the
15 competitiveness of U.S. commodities and adds
16 stress on additional financial burdens for
17 transport.

18 So this brings us to Brandon Road.
19 There are about 15 million tons of cargo moving
20 through the Brandon Road lock each year,
21 including coal, petroleum, iron and steel for
22 manufacturing, chemicals, aggregates, cement, and

1 other commodities essential for national and
2 regional economies.

3 The TSP collateral damages include
4 reduced capacity for reduced volumes of cargoes.
5 These additional burdens for modal shifts include
6 for each dry cargo barge that you take out of the
7 waterway, that's an additional 16 railcars or 70
8 tractor trailers.

9 One 30,000-barrel tank barge is the
10 equivalent of about 46 railcars and 144 tractor
11 trailers on an already stressed system.

12 Additional lockage costs are estimated
13 to be about \$1200 per event for locking delays
14 due to the TSP. And of course the Coast Guard's
15 own risk assessment has calculated the additional
16 risks of electric shock, as well as congestion-
17 related accidents.

18 At the end of the day, the
19 nonstructural methods are working. They're in
20 use by the Illinois Department of Natural
21 Resources and federal agencies. They've reduced
22 the leading edge of the Asian carp population by

1 68 percent in the Illinois River, and the leading
2 edge of the carp has not advanced in over 26
3 years.

4 We'd like to thank you all for your
5 time today, as well as for the congressional
6 efforts of scheduling this meeting today. Thank
7 you.

8 MR. ZUERCHER: As Robert Hirschfeld
9 comes up, I'd like to invite Alfred House, Lynn
10 Muench, and Spencer Murphy to come forward.

11 MR. HIRSCHFELD: Robert Hirschfeld,
12 Prairie Rivers Network, 61820.

13 Thank you to the Corps for its effort
14 in producing this study for this opportunity to
15 provide comments.

16 Aquatic nuisance species pose a grave
17 threat to the ecological health of rivers and
18 lakes, as well the people and economies those
19 waters support, in both the Mississippi River
20 basin and the Great Lakes basin.

21 As such, we urge the Corps to move
22 forward with the Tentatively Selected Plan. It's

1 clear that Asian carp would be a disaster to the
2 Great Lakes and its economy, and we should thus
3 take the strongest preventative actions to
4 protect the lakes.

5 The Tentatively Selected Plan is a
6 good first step in preventing the further spread
7 of ANS, but it's also the bare minimum of what
8 should be done and only a first step.

9 The TSP is the minimum of what should
10 be done because, as the study makes clear,
11 nonstructural measures are not enough. The Corps
12 states -- and this is a direct quote from the
13 study -- "the no-new-federal-action and
14 nonstructural alternatives cannot deter the
15 continued upstream movement of bighead and silver
16 carp from the lower Illinois Waterway and the
17 Mississippi River."

18 And to say that the leading edge of
19 the carp haven't moved in 26 years is to ignore
20 population dynamics in the lower pools, to ignore
21 the fact that larvae, eggs, and small fish have
22 increasingly been found upstream, and to ignore

1 the fact that silver carp is found beyond the
2 electric barriers this year, 2017.

3 The Tentatively Selected Plan can only
4 be a first step, as it will not stop aquatic
5 invasive species from moving from the Great Lakes
6 into the Mississippi River.

7 Under the original GLMRIS
8 authorization, Congress tasked the Corps with
9 developing solutions to prevent the two-way
10 transfer of ANS. Brandon Road is not a two-way
11 solution; it can never be a two-way solution.

12 No matter how many controls are
13 installed in the lock chamber at Brandon,
14 invasive species coming from the Great Lakes can
15 simply go over the spillway of the dam at Brandon
16 and continue on at the Mississippi River and all
17 of its tributaries.

18 The Corps has identified more invasive
19 species threatening to move from the Great Lakes
20 into the Mississippi River than vice versa. Some
21 of these species headed towards the Mississippi
22 River are labeled a greater threat even than

1 Asian carp, yet little to nothing is being done
2 to address the threat of these ANS to the
3 Mississippi River region. That is unacceptable.

4 The Corps should fulfill Congress'
5 original mandate to develop solutions that
6 prevent the transfer of all ANS moving in both
7 directions. If the Corps needs additional
8 funding to continue this work, sufficient funds
9 should be so allocated.

10 The TSP is ultimately also not
11 protective enough against the Asian carp threat.
12 Even after completion, the TSP leaves a
13 substantial risk of the establishment of Asian
14 carp. One of the experts surveyed in the study
15 estimates that risk near 40 percent.

16 We are not comfortable subjecting the
17 health of the Great Lakes and its industries to
18 that level of risk. Indeed, the Corps study
19 makes a strong case for lock closure.

20 Under lock closure the probability of
21 establishment effectively goes to zero. Of
22 course, lock closure is also cheaper for the

1 public. The reason for discarding the lock
2 closure option, as stated today, is disruption to
3 navigation, but we should examine the assumption
4 that navigation must continue unimpeded, at all
5 costs.

6 In the Corps fiscal year 2017 budget,
7 public expenditures for the inland waterway
8 system added up to \$1.7 billion. Through the
9 Inland Waterway Trust Fund, the navigation
10 industry chipped in only 75 million. That is a
11 public subsidy of 95 percent.

12 The health of our rivers as well as
13 the multibillion-dollar Great Lakes industries
14 and thousands of jobs they support should not be
15 held hostage to a navigation industry that does
16 not pay its own way and that could not stay
17 afloat without the largesse of public subsidies,
18 rather we should be implementing the strongest,
19 most protective two-way solutions to protect
20 these waters for the benefit of the public that
21 pays for them.

22 The artificial connection between the

1 Great Lakes and Mississippi River that allows for
2 ANS transfer exists because, at the end of the
3 1800s, decisions were made to send municipal
4 industrial waste to the Illinois and Mississippi
5 Rivers in order to keep Lake Michigan clean.

6 It is well past time we stopped
7 sending pollution to the Mississippi River, and
8 it's past time that we stopped allowing ANS to
9 come into the Mississippi River.

10 I encourage the Corps to take
11 holistic, comprehensive, and robust two-way
12 solutions. Thank you.

13 MR. ZUERCHER: Could you state your
14 name and zip code just to make sure.

15 MR. HIRSCHFELD: Yeah. Robert
16 Hirschfeld, Prairie Rivers Network, 61820.

17 MR. ZUERCHER: Thank you.

18 Alfred House.

19 MR. HOUSE: Alfred House, Apostle
20 Islands Sport Fishermen's Association, and Lake
21 Superior advisor to the Great Lakes Fisheries
22 Commission, U.S. Board of Advisors, 54891.

1 Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for
2 the opportunity to report on the draft GLMRIS
3 Brandon Road TSP.

4 As president of the Apostle Islands
5 Sport Fishermen's Association, as well as a
6 advisor to the Great Lakes Fisheries Commission,
7 I would like to thank the Corps for its
8 continuing efforts to deal with this threat to
9 the fishery's environment of the Great Lakes.

10 The health and well-being of this
11 fishery allows it to contribute multiple billions
12 of dollars to the economy of the United States,
13 as well as being the livelihood of countless
14 people and families in the Great Lakes region.

15 It would be easy to dismiss the threat
16 of Asian carp to Lake Superior, where I live, the
17 most remote of the Great Lakes, except for the
18 overwhelming evidence of the frightening rapidity
19 with which these species have colonized the
20 Mississippi River and all of its tributaries
21 within the space of 20 years.

22 This invasion indeed has come with a

1 tremendous cost to the citizens and environment
2 of the Mississippi, Ohio, and Missouri River
3 watersheds.

4 A peer-reviewed binational risk
5 assessment found that if allowed into the Great
6 Lakes, Asian carp would colonize all the Great
7 Lakes within 20 years. This colonization would
8 be followed by large-scale economic and
9 environmental disruption as the carp displaced
10 native species.

11 In the face of this threat, the
12 actions to date to prevent the spread of Asian
13 carp, while deeply appreciated, do not reduce the
14 risk to an acceptable level in the future.

15 Indeed, the recent discovery of a
16 silver carp that was documented by otolith
17 analysis to originate from the Ohio watershed but
18 was found above the current electric barrier
19 points to the pressing need for further
20 roadblocks.

21 It is my opinion, as well as that of
22 my association and of my fellow GLFC advisors,

1 that further efforts to build a strong, redundant
2 invasive species control structure to thwart
3 Asian carp as well as other invasive species is
4 the next critical action in preventing the
5 colonization of the Great Lakes by unwanted and
6 dangerous species.

7 And the Brandon Road plan offers the
8 logical next step to do that, due to its unique
9 location and current existing structures, while
10 eventual physical separation needs to be the
11 ultimate goal. A larger strategy is necessary
12 for the Chicago Area Waterway System, and the
13 Brandon Road TSP plan is where to start.

14 Thank you.

15 MR. ZUERCHER: Lynn Muench.

16 MS. MUENCH: Are you going to start me
17 out with one minute remaining?

18 MR. ZUERCHER: No. I was waiting for
19 you to start --

20 (General laughter.)

21 MR. ZUERCHER: -- so I could give you
22 the full three minutes. Here. Better?

1 MS. MUENCH: Lynn Muench with the
2 American Waterway Operators and National Trade
3 Association for the Tugboat, Towboat, and Barge
4 Industry; zip code 63104.

5 First I'd like to thank the Louisiana
6 delegation that's here for encouraging the Coast
7 Guard to come down here to hold a public hearing.
8 This is where a very large percentage of the
9 Brandon Road stakeholders live. However, I'm
10 still disappointed that you've decided not to go
11 to Houston, where another very vibrant group of
12 folks are impacted by this and will not have an
13 opportunity to testify in person.

14 AWO is committed to protecting the
15 Great Lakes and the Mississippi River from
16 aquatic nuisance species, while preserving
17 commercial navigation. GLMRIS identified 13
18 species in the Great Lakes that have a medium to
19 high risk to the Mississippi River and only three
20 that pose a medium and high risk in the
21 Mississippi River to the Great Lakes.

22 Logically we should be focusing on the

1 13 and not the three if we're really trying to do
2 what's best for the nation.

3 AWO, however, does support the suite
4 of nonstructural control measures contained in
5 the TSP, and another other nonstructural control
6 measures that come to light as we move forward.

7 Nonstructural control measures such as
8 overfishing have reduced the leading edge of the
9 Asian carp population by 68 percent in the
10 Illinois River and have ensured that the Asian
11 carp population has not moved in over 26 years.
12 I'm going to say that over again, because it is
13 absolutely true, no matter what else anyone says:
14 The Asian carp population has not moved in over
15 26 years. This TSP is nothing more than a
16 solution looking for a problem.

17 AWO members are the leaders of safety
18 and are committed to zero harm to life, to
19 property, and the environment. This TSP poses
20 serious risk to mariner safety.

21 The Coast Guard recently released a
22 preliminary risk assessment of the structural

1 control technologies contained in the TSP. Let
2 me point out just a few of the concerns:
3 obviously, an increased risk of electric shock,
4 but this is even true with the intermittently
5 activated electric barrier; potential audio
6 interference that could occur between crew
7 members and crew members and lock personnel,
8 increasing the possibility of allisions,
9 collisions, and falls overboard; increased
10 congestion-related incidents that could cause
11 allisions and collisions; induced vessel motions
12 from the flushing lock that could cause fall-
13 overboards and allisions; and the list goes on.

14 If human safety is a priority, this
15 TSP must be thrown away. The TSP would reduce
16 Brandon Road by 10 to 12 million tons a year.
17 That would mean we could possibly move over 400
18 and 545 trucks on the road, increasing pollution,
19 increasing taxes to repair those roads. It would
20 also increase the delay 2.44 hours per lockage,
21 costing a minimum of \$1200 per lockage and really
22 having an avalanche towards a negative NED.

1 The Corps also estimates that the O&M
2 per year on this would be \$8.3 million. That's
3 approximately 25 percent of the money that is
4 presently spent on the entire Illinois Waterway
5 per year for O&M. That seems a bit ridiculous.

6 The Corps must add reality to the
7 decision-making process. Only the nonstructural
8 actions make logical sense.

9 MR. ZUERCHER: As Spencer Murphy comes
10 up, I invite Larry Barbish, Matt Rota, and Jim
11 Stark to come forward.

12 MR. MURPHY: Good afternoon. I'm
13 Spencer Murphy with Canal Barge Company, 70118.

14 I'd like to thank you for the
15 opportunity to comment today. We will be
16 submitting more detailed written comments, but I
17 appreciate the Corps holding the hearing here in
18 New Orleans, and I would like to take a second to
19 please thank everybody in the room; please thank
20 our Louisiana delegation for urging the Corps to
21 come here. This was not originally on the Corps'
22 list of hearings, so I really appreciate Senator

1 Kennedy, Senator Cassidy, Congressman Scalise,
2 and all of our congressmen for making this
3 happen.

4 Often lost in the noise surrounding
5 the Asian carp is that this is a national issue;
6 it's not a Great Lakes issue. Even though this
7 started with Michigan versus Illinois, the
8 Supreme Court case, it is a national issue that
9 impacts Louisiana if not as much or more than
10 Michigan or any other state.

11 It's also worth noting this whole
12 process started 10 years ago with a political
13 campaign in Michigan. Attorney General Mike Cox,
14 looking to become governor of Michigan, seized on
15 this as the issue to launch him into the
16 statehouse. He lost his election, and he lost
17 his lawsuit in the Supreme Court, and yet here we
18 are 10 years later.

19 A lot of the rhetoric that was
20 injected into this issue back then is still
21 around today, even though the fish have not moved
22 since that time.

1 So I'd like to highlight some of the
2 direct connections between Louisiana, Illinois,
3 and the reason why we should be here today and
4 why it's appropriate to have this hearing.

5 As you know the Corps Navigation Data
6 Center tracks all waterborne commodity movements
7 in the nation. On their website you can find
8 links to reports that how much cargo moves from
9 one particular state to another in any given
10 year.

11 According to the Corps' data,
12 Louisiana is by far the number-one point of
13 origin for cargo moving into the Illinois. In
14 2015, 9.8 million tons of cargo moved by water
15 from Louisiana into Illinois. The next-largest
16 point of origin was interstate traffic within
17 Illinois, of 7.6 million tons.

18 The next largest out of that -- beyond
19 that was from Canada, across the Great Lakes, at
20 only 1.7 million tons. So what that means is
21 just over one-third of all tons moving into
22 Illinois by water originates in the state of

1 Louisiana.

2 You can look at that from the reverse
3 angle as well: Cargo leaving the state of
4 Louisiana, number one is Texas, destination.
5 Number two destination is Florida; number three
6 is Illinois.

7 If the Corps creates a bottleneck at
8 Illinois in Brandon Road lock and dam, it'll have
9 direct negative consequences on interstate
10 commerce, on the national economy, and on the
11 environment and, from a local perspective, it is
12 absolutely vital to Louisiana that we keep the
13 Illinois River open for business.

14 Speaking from Canal Barges'
15 perspective, our Baton Rouge to Chicago service
16 is the very heart of what we do, and our over 800
17 employees are dependent upon the Corps keeping
18 our waterways open.

19 All those tons that move by water do
20 so not because of the barge industry here,
21 because we're some powerful force that can bend
22 the laws of economics to our will. It's because

1 it's the most efficient form of transportation
2 for our customers.

3 We have the fewest spills, we have the
4 least amount of carbon emissions, and we have the
5 best safety record, compared to truck and rail.
6 Every ton that is taken off the water will move,
7 but it will move by truck or rail, with resulting
8 increases in pollution, personal injury, and
9 spills.

10 The Corps' policy, both at Brandon
11 Road and around the country, should be to
12 maintain and improve navigation on the waterways,
13 not drive traffic into other modes.

14 The TSP should be a targeted do-no-
15 harm solution, not a wish list of possible
16 options to be experimented upon at a piece of
17 vital maritime infrastructure. We are not pro
18 carp, we are pro common sense.

19 The current suite of efforts are
20 working and should be continued. The TSP
21 presents a real threat to our company, our
22 industry, our state, and our national economy.

1 For our reasons, we oppose the TSP and ask you
2 respectfully to focus your efforts on
3 nonstructural solutions.

4 Thank you.

5 MR. ZUERCHER: Larry Barbish.

6 MR. BARBISH: Thank you. My name's
7 Larry Barbish. I'm vice president of marketing
8 for Canal Barge Company, 70112.

9 I've been involved in the barge
10 industry for over 40 years. In my current role
11 I'm responsible for overseeing Canal Barge
12 Company's dry cargo operations. As a part of
13 that trade, we move bulk commodities and cargoes
14 throughout the inland waterways system.

15 One of our most vital trade lanes is
16 moving commodities between Chicagoland and the
17 Gulf. It truly is the biggest operation that I
18 think just about every barge line has.

19 Our towboats move over 2,000 barges
20 per year in each direction in this trade pattern,
21 and it happens 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.
22 We're not the largest barge line, we've not the

1 only barge line. This gets multiplied by
2 everybody that trades through there, so this is a
3 massive operation.

4 Accordingly, our customers and in turn
5 our employees have a keen interest in making sure
6 that the Illinois River remains open for
7 commerce, and any disruption of the system has a
8 direct impact on us. As was just said, it moves
9 it off the river, moves it into less favorable
10 modes of transportation for the nation.

11 The inland waterways are a national
12 system, and they're vital to the economy of the
13 United States. What happens on one end of the
14 system impacts the rest of the system. And given
15 the Corps' role as the sole agency responsible
16 for maintaining our locks and dams, every care
17 should be taken to ensure that whatever is done
18 to stop Asian carp does not unreasonably impact
19 commerce on the Illinois River.

20 Any period of construction that
21 involves shutting down a lock has a direct impact
22 on us. Any new structure that slows our tows or

1 requires us to break tow has a direct impact on
2 us. And certainly any electric barrier has a
3 direct impact on us and puts our vessel crew at
4 risk.

5 In my view, the Tentatively Selected
6 Plan will create hardships for our vessel crews
7 and needlessly harm the flow of cargo, without
8 providing any more benefits than could be gained
9 through nonstructural means.

10 The current program of work, including
11 targeted overfishing, is having success and
12 should be allowed to continue. We know that the
13 TSP will have a series of costs and negative
14 consequences, yet there are no certain benefits
15 to be gained. I strongly encourage the Corps to
16 abandon the TSP and focus on nonstructural
17 measures.

18 Thank you.

19 MR. ZUERCHER: As Matt Rota comes up,
20 I'd just like to mention that if you are on the
21 phone and you are desiring to make a comment, we
22 do have someone that is monitoring the webinar.

1 If you would go into the chat portion and send a
2 message to everyone, we will make note of your
3 desire to speak, and then we'll invite you to
4 speak here in a couple more people.

5 With that, Matt, it's all yours.

6 MR. ROTA: Thank you. My name is Matt
7 Rota, and I am the senior policy director for the
8 Gulf Restoration Network. My zip code is 70130,
9 and I am a resident of Louisiana.

10 I am here first to just say that we
11 are in support of the Brandon Road project, that
12 we are encouraged or happy to see that the GLMRIS
13 program's actually resulting in something. It is
14 frustrating that this is the very first project
15 after 10 years that is just starting to get off,
16 and this isn't even going to be on the ground
17 till 2025, if everything goes well.

18 And so, first of all, we think that
19 this process is moving much more slowly than it
20 should be, in that we need to have a two-way
21 solution, and right now we're proposing the very
22 first solution, which is only a one-way solution.

1 Obviously we care about the Great
2 Lakes, and we don't want the carp getting up
3 there, and so the Brandon Road project is a
4 project that we support and want to see continue.

5 However, while this is all happening,
6 we would also want to see the two-way solutions
7 being looked at, like has been said before by
8 several other people, that there are -- there
9 were three species of concern going up and 10
10 going down, and we need to protect our waters
11 down here as well. So while the Brandon Road is
12 moving forward, we need to be getting those two-
13 way solutions online and moving as quickly as
14 possible.

15 I know some might think there isn't as
16 much of a concern because, you know, the
17 Mississippi River ends up in saltwater, and so
18 once it ends up there, who cares. Right? But we
19 have been opening the Bonnet Carre spillway more
20 and more often over the past 20 years, and if
21 invaders -- nuisance species get into there, that
22 fresh water can go straight up into our waters of

1 the north shore of Lake Pontchartrain and invade
2 and wreak havoc on the fresh waters of Louisiana,
3 not to mention if it gets into the Intracoastal
4 Waterway and we have conditions there that we
5 could really be seeing a major impact.

6 So I urge this panel -- I thank you
7 all for coming down here. I urge this panel and
8 everybody that's working on GLMRIS to move
9 forward with the Brandon Road project, but make
10 sure that you're prioritizing the entire river
11 system and that this isn't all about carp and
12 that we need to be looking at all of them.

13 However, and that being said, I think
14 that the -- we shouldn't be just looking at
15 nonstructural solutions when dealing with carp,
16 because somebody mentioned, Oh, we removed 63
17 percent. Well, that's still, if my math is
18 right, 37 percent that we didn't catch. And it
19 just takes a small population to get in there and
20 to completely wreak havoc on our largest
21 freshwater ecosystem that we have in the world.

22 Thank you.

1 MR. ZUERCHER: As Jim Stark comes up,
2 would Garey Forster please come forward.

3 MR. STARK: Good afternoon. I'm Jim
4 Stark. I'm the president of the Gulf
5 Intracoastal Canal Association. My zip code is
6 32932.

7 The Gulf Intracoastal Canal
8 Association, or GICA, as I like to refer it, kind
9 of shortened form, is a 112-year-old trade
10 association representing 200 industry members
11 involved in towboat and barge operations,
12 shipping, shipyards, and associated waterways
13 industries which use the Gulf Intracoastal
14 Waterway and its tributaries.

15 Of course, those tributaries are far
16 reaching, including the Mississippi River system
17 and eventually the Illinois River and all the way
18 to the Great Lakes.

19 Now, our members aren't limited to the
20 five-state Gulf Intracoastal Waterway, starting
21 in Florida and going all the way over to Texas,
22 but they routinely operate on those tributaries,

1 moving commerce up and down our vital river
2 systems.

3 Inasmuch as GICA's mission is focused
4 on facilitating commerce through ensuring safe,
5 reliable, and efficient Gulf waterways, the
6 status of the connecting rivers and waterways
7 infrastructure to the north is always of great
8 interest to GICA members.

9 GICA and its members are certainly
10 committed to the same aims as the GLMRIS study:
11 protecting the Great Lakes and the Mississippi
12 River basins from aquatic nuisance species, while
13 maintaining commercial navigation.

14 The Tentatively Selected Plan, the
15 technology alternative of the recent study, has
16 several unresolved issues which may affect and
17 most certainly concern our membership.

18 Recent data indicates that the leading
19 edge of the Asian carp population in the river
20 has been reduced by 68 percent by overfishing.
21 Further, that leading edge has not moved any
22 further northward in 26 years. Nonstructural

1 actions like this and others, such as piscicides,
2 ought to be carefully considered before
3 defaulting to expensive, disruptive structural
4 and technical options outlined in the TSP.

5 GICA's concerns regarding the TSP also
6 center on issues that most affect our membership:
7 safety. According to the Coast Guard, mariners,
8 especially our deckhands, may be at increased
9 risk of death or injury due to both the electric
10 barrier and noise features.

11 Additional safety concerns arise from
12 potential congestion-related allisions and
13 collisions associated with a backlog of tows
14 waiting to lock, and the effects of flushing and
15 water jets on vessel movements in the locks.

16 Economic: The TSP estimates increased
17 lockage delays of about 2-1/2 hours. Surely the
18 \$1200 per lockage delay costs will negatively
19 affect towing companies, shippers, and ultimately
20 the nation's economy.

21 The TSP's reliance on unproven and
22 maintenance-intensive technologies is expected to

1 reduce lock capacity at the Brandon Road lock by
2 10 to 12 million tons per year. Reduced lock
3 capacity will result in shippers shifting
4 commodities to other modes; for instance, another
5 545,000 trucks on the roads per year would be
6 needed to carry those 10 to 12 million tons of
7 cargo. This will directly affect and impact
8 commuter travel time, safety, air quality, and
9 highway O&M.

10 Also this shift away from the more
11 efficient, safe, and environmentally sound barge
12 mode of transportation would significantly
13 decrease our industry's family-wage maritime
14 jobs. These are jobs not only in our river
15 states of the heartland but states along our Gulf
16 Coast as well.

17 Thank you.

18 MR. ZUERCHER: Garey.

19 MR. FORSTER: Good afternoon. My name
20 is Garey Forster. I'm here representing
21 Louisiana Mid-Continent Oil and Gas. I live in
22 New Orleans, 70116.

1 Most of what has been said -- and
2 first let me start off by thanking the Louisiana
3 congressional delegation for inviting you all, as
4 well as you all for coming to New Orleans to hear
5 what we have to say.

6 Mid-Continent Oil and Gas represents
7 the major oil companies, everything from
8 exploration out in the Gulf through pipes,
9 refining, and pumping it at the station. So it
10 appears to me, just from listening and reading,
11 that this is a disagreement, a squabble, whatever
12 you want to call it, in one particular area of
13 the country, but we want you to understand that
14 it will dramatically impact the oil and gas
15 coming from the Gulf Coast and moving throughout
16 the country.

17 And that's basically what I'm here to
18 say, that Canal Barge and others have explained
19 the importance of that transportation model, but
20 I'm talking about just the energy dependence of
21 the country and how it gets from the Gulf of
22 Mexico up to that area where they drive cars and

1 fly planes and all those good things that need
2 oil and gas.

3 So we'd ask you to consider the impact
4 that it will have on oil and gas coming from the
5 Gulf Coast in anything that you do that slows the
6 barge traffic.

7 Thank you very much.

8 MR. ZUERCHER: All right. At this
9 time I'm going to open it up to anyone that's on
10 the phone. If you are on the phone and you would
11 like to make a comment, same thing; we ask that
12 you announce your name and your zip code for
13 sure, and if you'd like to announce an
14 organization, that's fine as well.

15 (No response.)

16 MR. ZUERCHER: All right. Hearing
17 none, since we don't have anybody on the phone
18 that would like to speak at this time, I then
19 open it up to this room. If there's anybody in
20 the room that did not get a chance to sign up but
21 would like to come up and make a statement, we
22 still would like you to keep it to three minutes,

1 but feel free come up.

2 MR. McDANIEL: I actually signed up.
3 You should have me listed.

4 MR. ZUERCHER: Oh, and I do have a
5 couple of names that didn't check in.

6 MR. McDANIEL: Vaughn McDaniel,
7 LeBeouf Brothers Towing.

8 MR. ZUERCHER: Okay. Sorry I didn't
9 catch you on the list there.

10 MR. McDANIEL: That's okay; it's all
11 good.

12 I'm Vaughn McDaniel. I represent
13 LeBeouf Brothers Towing Company in Houma,
14 Louisiana; that's 70360.

15 And more importantly, I represent the
16 mariners that work for our company and the ones
17 that transit the Illinois Waterways in its
18 entirety. We operate a fleet of tank barges that
19 depend on the Brandon Road lock to deliver
20 products to Chicago and the surrounding areas and
21 states.

22 We would like to thank the Army Corps,

1 Colonel, Andy, Jeff and company -- I've made many
2 trips up there to Chicago, including Brandon Road
3 last month; it was a very informative trip -- for
4 having this very important forum here today.

5 I think a high percentage of barges
6 that transit the lock, as Spencer Murphy said
7 earlier, originate in Louisiana and the
8 stakeholders at stake should be recognized. The
9 continued safe operation of Brandon Road Lock
10 must be supported.

11 With that said, we have examined the
12 TSP, our company has, and we've concluded that we
13 cannot support it based on three primary factors:
14 First and foremost is safety. It's been talked
15 about a lot. The proposed installation of
16 electric fish barrier will ultimately prevent
17 tank barges that carry liquid hydrocarbons from
18 accessing the Chicago region.

19 And we understand it's intermittent at
20 first, but as the old cliché goes, if they build
21 it, they will come. They build it, they will use
22 it, full time. We see that, so we're concerned.

1 The use of electricity within proximity of this
2 lock or any lock is not workable and, frankly,
3 dangerous.

4 The safety of our crew members is our
5 foremost responsibility, and the use of this
6 technology cannot be supported.

7 Secondly, the proposed water jets also
8 present concerns navigating the lock. Most of
9 our tows are 108 feet wide, which only gives us
10 one foot on each side of the tow. The currents
11 will create navigation concerns that could lead
12 to lock allisions, which could jeopardize the
13 safety of the crew and the tow. If they fall
14 overboard during build or breaking tows, it could
15 lead to the death of the employee; it's a big
16 concern.

17 Secondly is economic factors. The TSP
18 has a significant consequence of financial
19 burdens to our industry and the U.S. economy. It
20 has been established that additional lockage
21 delay of 2.44 hours per tow can be expected.
22 This adds up to roughly \$1200 for each lock-in

1 and does not consider the additional cost to the
2 end users.

3 This alone shifts products to other
4 forms of transportation that are less friendly to
5 the environment. By reducing the capacity of the
6 lock by 10 to 12 million tons per year results in
7 over half a million truck shipments per year has
8 been discussed earlier.

9 Construction time and subsequent
10 closure for O&M would adversely affect many
11 businesses that depend on the waterway. The end
12 businesses would be burdened by the huge delays and
13 increased costs associated with these periods.

14 Our own company, with tows originating
15 in Texas and Louisiana, would be forced to tie up
16 with multiple vessels and multiple barges while
17 these closures take place. The trickle-down
18 effect is far reaching and substantial.

19 Secondly -- thirdly, rather, is the
20 use of taxpayer dollars. A more effective use of
21 taxpayer dollars would be to support the Illinois
22 DNR by fishing down and fishing out the area.

1 This has been effective, since no detected -- or
2 little detected migration of these listed species
3 has occurred over the past 26 years. This
4 process should be expanded, which will help
5 further mitigation of this species.

6 Secondly, the existing electric
7 dispersement barrier at Romeoville has become in
8 a state of disrepair and will be -- will require
9 replacement at a cost of several million dollars
10 to the taxpayers.

11 The life of the existing system fell
12 short of the 25-year expectancy by some 16 years.
13 This is not a good investment for the
14 overburdened American taxpayer.

15 In summary, we're strongly in
16 opposition to the TSP in its current form.
17 Nonstructural modifications of the plan can be
18 supported -- we do, however, support many of the
19 nonstructural items mentioned in the TSP,
20 including overfishing of the species.

21 We understand the issue with the
22 migration of the unwanted species in the Great

1 Lakes, but we must differ with the approach of
2 this plan. There is a better way using
3 nonstructural methods and processes. Please
4 understand our concerns and we hope that changes
5 can be made to support nonstructural methods.

6 Thank you very much. Appreciate it.

7 MR. ZUERCHER: Thanks, Vaughn. Thanks
8 for your patience.

9 MR. MCDANIEL: No problem.

10 MR. ZUERCHER: Let's just check the
11 list one last time. I have Harrison Crabtree and
12 Patrick Morton also signed up online. If either
13 of you are in the room, I invite you to come
14 forward and make your statements.

15 MR. CRABTREE: I'm Harrison Crabtree
16 with Greater New Orleans, Inc., 70163.

17 I'm here today representing Greater
18 New Orleans, Inc., a 10-parish economic
19 development organization for southeast Louisiana.
20 We're reaching out today to express concerns in
21 regard to the proposed carp control system that
22 would be installed at Brandon Road lock and dam.

1 The proposed plan would severely
2 inhibit the commercial shipping industry that is
3 vital to Louisiana's economy. Encompassing
4 nearly 29,000 jobs and contributing over \$4.6
5 billion to Louisiana's gross regional product,
6 the water transportation cluster is crucial to
7 our state's economy.

8 Any impediments to commerce on the
9 waterways in Illinois would a ripple effect on
10 our state's economy. In fact, both Illinois and
11 Louisiana are valuable partners when it comes to
12 waterborne commerce.

13 According to most recent data, more
14 cargo arriving in Illinois by water originates in
15 Louisiana than from any other state.
16 Furthermore, Illinois is the third largest U.S.
17 point of destination of cargo leaving Louisiana
18 by water, behind only Texas and Florida.

19 This proposed plan would result in
20 timely and costly bottlenecks from numerous
21 companies who rely on the efficient movement of
22 cargo through the Brandon Road lock and dam.

1 We strongly urge the Corps to
2 reconsider the proposed plans and explore options
3 that both preserve commercial navigation and
4 protect the Great Lakes and Mississippi River
5 basin from aquatic nuisance.

6 Thank you.

7 MR. MORTON: Good afternoon. My name
8 is Patrick Morton, assistant vice president of
9 vessel operations for the Gulf for Ingram Barge
10 Company; zip code is 70068.

11 Being last has got its good points and
12 its bad points. A lot of great points brought
13 up. First off, thank you for the opportunity to
14 come up and talk. Thank you for coming down here
15 and taking the time and showing the interest and
16 sincerity in this.

17 One other thing is everything's been
18 covered for the most part that I had notes on.
19 As a representative of Ingram Barge, I would like
20 to say that we are -- that Ingram Barge Company
21 is committed to protecting the Great Lakes and
22 Mississippi River basin from aquatic nuisance

1 species while preserving commercial navigation
2 and that we think the current actions are
3 working.

4 We've heard some pros and cons on both
5 sides of things and some questioning on the
6 different types of information that's available
7 and data that's available, but I think one that
8 we need to remember is that we're all supposed to
9 stewards of the environment, of the navigation
10 system, of our taxpayers and of our customers and
11 of the economy.

12 And to be good stewards, we have to
13 make sure that when we do make our decisions and
14 we move forward with things -- like for instance,
15 if we really move away from the transportation on
16 the inland waterways in the Chicago area, what it
17 will do as far as shifting over those movements
18 of tonnages into rail, into truck, and if there's
19 other means that I'm not aware of, that, you
20 know, the economic impact on that is negative.
21 The environmental impact on that is negative.
22 Water transportation, environmentally, is the

1 best way to go, and economically it is as well.

2 We also have a -- you know, we have a
3 backbone to the country in our water
4 transportation, and we also -- in that regard we
5 bring stability to the nation in terms of
6 strategic importance and in economic importance.

7 And we have to make sure that we don't
8 treat that lightly by building in delays in the
9 already taxed system, antiquated system in a lot
10 of ways; taking funds where it needs to be
11 utilized in other areas and moved into an area
12 that maybe hasn't quite been studied quite enough
13 or may have other options that I think as
14 stewards we owe ourselves to look at that.

15 And I appreciate your time. Thank
16 you.

17 MR. ZUERCHER: All right. One last
18 check with our folks on the phone. Anybody that
19 wishes to make a comment at this time?

20 (No response.)

21 MR. ZUERCHER: All right. Hearing
22 none, again, anyone here in the room who wishes

1 to make a comment or finish a comment that they
2 didn't get a chance to finish?

3 (No response.)

4 MR. ZUERCHER: All right. Seeing
5 none --

6 COL BAUMGARTNER: Hey Jeff, what I'd
7 like to do, though, is just take the
8 opportunity -- I know we're about to shift gears
9 a little bit here -- is if we could, I'd like to
10 entertain one or two questions, and then -- I
11 know Jeff's going to say this, too -- but
12 emphasize that we are going to stay after,
13 brought the panel of subject-matter experts,
14 whether it be operations, economics, planning,
15 and the planning effort. We're certainly going
16 to stay afterwards, and we're willing to
17 entertain any questions on an individual basis,
18 of course, to make sure you don't leave here with
19 questions unanswered.

20 But are there any -- maybe one or two
21 questions before we move down the road and close
22 out?

1 MR. ZUERCHER: Lynn, go ahead.

2 MS. MUENCH: I had a question -- and
3 I know Andrew and I have been going back and
4 forth. I still don't think I know the answer.

5 What do you think is going to be the
6 percentage of time you couldn't use the flushing
7 lock because of low water?

8 MR. LEICHTY: I don't remember that
9 right off the top of my head, but I have that
10 note here. But that's something that we are
11 working through, I understand, because of the
12 pool of water there; there's a potential for
13 certain times of the year to not have enough
14 water to flush the lock.

15 And that also possibly coincides with
16 the time of year when there would not be floating
17 species, or at least larvae, eggs, at that time
18 of year, possibly, as well.

19 So there's -- it's not super-
20 definitive, but I think our engineers have a
21 range there. I don't know if it's in that --

22 MS. DAVIS: Right. I think we've

1 indicated that there would be some challenges in
2 the late summer/early fall because there might
3 not be enough water in the pool, so -- but that
4 depends on the year. You know, every year the
5 rainfall is different and the volume in the pool
6 will be different.

7 If we have a low -- you know, drought
8 over the summer, we may not be able to flush the
9 entire summer, but I think based on the analysis
10 they did, there's an average of 70 to 80 percent
11 chance that we can flush without affecting the
12 pool from March to August. So it's the remaining
13 part of the year that that could be problematic.

14 MR. ZUERCHER: Did that answer your
15 question?

16 MS. MUENCH: For now.

17 MR. ZUERCHER: You have more? Go ahead.

18 MS. MUENCH: One other question. The
19 1.3 billion recreational fishing trips and the --
20 what is the source of that?

21 MS. ABOU-EL-SEOUD: So that estimate
22 was approximately 63 million trips annually, per

1 year, for recreational fishing and the associated
2 \$1.3 billion in that economic value.

3 The source of that estimate was the
4 GLMRIS report. We worked in coordination with
5 Cornell University to complete an economic
6 analysis. We conducted survey efforts as well as
7 analytical modeling to arrive at those estimates.

8 MR. ZUERCHER: Any other questions?

9 Yes, ma'am.

10 AUDIENCE: It's not really a question.

11 I have to apologize. I was late getting here,
12 but did you talk about what the cost for the
13 channel that's not part of the original plan? I
14 know there were some concerns about even
15 commenting on a plan when you didn't know how
16 much the engineered channel is going to cost.

17 MS. ABOU-EL-SEOUD: Yes. We did
18 address that question, and I looked it up. It's
19 62.3 million that we have as the estimated cost
20 for the engineered channel.

21 MS. MUENCH: Do you have an estimate
22 on the O&M?

1 MR. LEICHTY: So the O&M for the
2 structural measures is at 8.2 million and the
3 nonstructural is 11.3.

4 MS. MUENCH: That includes the
5 engineered channel?

6 MR. LEICHTY: The operations of
7 structural measures is 8.2, maintenance and
8 upkeep. That includes the engineered channel
9 maintenance and upkeep as well as the flushing
10 lock, structural measures.

11 MR. ZUERCHER: Any other questions?

12 Yes, sir.

13 AUDIENCE: Who is the current cost-
14 share partner for the Brandon Road Lock?

15 MR. ZUERCHER: Well, I can answer that.
16 Who is the current cost-share partner? We
17 currently do not have a cost-share partner. This
18 is 100 percent federal study. We are looking for
19 a nonfederal sponsor. If anyone wants to
20 volunteer, we have paperwork you can sign shortly
21 after this meeting.

22 COL BAUMGARTNER: I'll continue on

1 that line of thought real quick. So, yes, the
2 study is 100 percent federal. However, to move
3 forward from the study, Water Resource
4 Development Act of 1986, of course, requires us
5 to have a nonfederal sponsor to execute the
6 planning, engineering, design, then also the
7 construction to move forward.

8 So, no, we do not have a nonfederal
9 sponsor at this point in time to move beyond the
10 study phase, we continue to seek nonfederal
11 sponsorship, because we think that's critically
12 important.

13 And for the Corps to move beyond the
14 study phase in the absence of a nonfederal
15 sponsor, you can anticipate we probably still
16 render a report, absent of a recommendation, so
17 that the nation can decide how to move forward,
18 and/or there has to be legislation that changed
19 the nonfederal sponsorship requirements for the
20 study.

21 MR. ZUERCHER: You had a question?

22 AUDIENCE: It's been answered. Thank

1 you.

2 MR. ZUERCHER: Oh, perfect. Okay.
3 Well, with that, we appreciate all of you taking
4 the time to be here today. It has been a
5 pleasure to be here in New Orleans for this day,
6 to have this meeting.

7 Thank you all for coming out and
8 making your comments. Again, the team will be
9 here to answer questions on an individual basis
10 should you still have them.

11 I also want to remind you that through
12 this Friday, through December 8, we will still be
13 accepting comments, and comments submitted via
14 our website, submitted via mail, all count
15 equally as much as comments here today that are
16 at our meeting. We have been sorting through
17 those that are arriving. We know of bunches more
18 that are probably on the way, and we look forward
19 to those, look forward to reading those and going
20 through them and working on answering all those
21 as we -- through the report itself.

22 So thank you again for your time. It

1 is 2:34, and we are going to adjourn this public
2 meeting.

3 (Whereupon, at 2:34 p.m., the public
4 meeting was concluded.)

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Before: US Army Corps of Engineers

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Place: New Orleans, LA

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