

KANKAKEE RIVER PRESERVATION ASSOCIATION

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MOMENCE - - ILLINOIS

Dec. 13th. 40

DIRECTORS

H. E. HOAG
NEIL METCALF
R. E. MURRY
R. E. FRANCE
W. V. SNOW
H. D. THOEMING

Dear Mr. Gragg:

Enclosed another copy of our report,

I am mailing another separately.

What do you think of this report and
do you think we have a chance to get this project
approved.

Do you think this plan is worthy of
consideration.

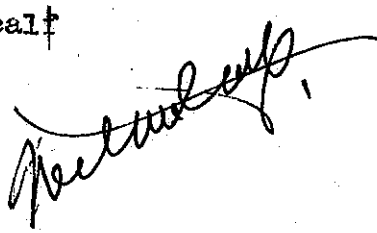
We would certainly appreciate any
suggestions you may be able to give us.

Of course this report is more clear with
one of our large maps to accompany it and if you wish one
of those we can furnish you with one.

With best wishes for the Xmas season,

I am, yours truly,

Neil Metcalf



Wm. H. D. H. H.
1911-1912

REPORT TO
THE DISTRICT ENGINEER
U. S. Engineer Office

Rockford, Illinois

1912

KANKAKEE RIVER
PRESERVATION
ASSOCIATION

Rockford, Illinois

REPORT TO
THE DISTRICT ENGINEER
U. S. Engineer Office
Chicago, Illinois
FROM
KANKAKEE RIVER
PRESERVATION
ASSOCIATION
Momence, Illinois

PART I

**Report of the Kankakee River
Preservation Association to ac-
company map.**

To Lt. Col. Richard U. Nicholas,
United States Corps of Engineers,
Chicago, Illinois:

We hereby present to you a
plan for improvement covering
that portion of the Kankakee
River between Momence, Illinois,
and the Illinois-Indiana State
Line, 8.6 miles.

This plan has been drawn by
a committee of Rivermen with a
working knowledge of the river
and conditions pertaining to any
planned development or improve-
ment thereon, augmented by re-
ports and opinions set forth in
Document 784, House of Repre-
sentatives, 71st Congress, 3rd ses-
sion, which this association con-
siders the only worthwhile auth-
orities on conditions past and
present concerning this reach of
river.

Now it has hitherto been ac-
knowledgeed there were three
parties vitally interested in the
stream.

First the City of Momence,
next the agricultural districts in
the 2,340 square miles of valley

East of Momence, and third the Rivermen. In the past this term Rivermen has meant those husky rough necked, hairy fisted steamboat men, lumberjacks, raftsmen, trappers and hunters who carried on up and down the river. These have mostly disappeared and the term as used here is meant to include the property owners on the different subdivisions now along this stretch of water and also the various sportsmen's clubs who are interested in the river from a conservation standpoint.

We will take up the various angles of the question as set forth in House Document No. 784.

First regarding the removal of the rock ledge at Momence the greatest desire of the agriculturalists. The City of Momence and the Rivermen are opposed to the removal of this natural dam only because they feel it would dry up the river during the summer months, some of the farmers also feel it would lower the ground water level injuring their lands.

Second, the City of Momence has always wanted a dam at that point to give them a beautiful navigable stream as it is just east of town where Indiana cut down the rock ledge in 1893. The farmers representing something like 900,000 acres of land on which they have already spent a million and a half dollars for drainage, have heretofore opposed this dam and have wanted the rock ledge removed entirely and the river straightened as it is in Indiana.

Now there are something like 800 cottages and permanent homes with another 3,000 lots laid out—all potential homesites—on this reach of river: together with another 468 families on the river just across the State Line in Indiana at Sumava Resorts Inc.: an investment of over two million dollars. These Rivermen strongly object to and will fight any straightening program.

The work done in the past by agriculturalists in the basin has been done with one object, drainage; this proved satisfactory for a number of years and was done without any great objections at the time by the other parties.

However, at last the current has cut away the berms and bars of the ditches dug above and moved it down into the eight and a half miles of river as shown on the map. This has not only nullified to a great extent the million and a half dollars spent in dredging, but it is also ruining the river in Illinois.

Districts in Indiana have so enlarged their ditches, the small ditch-Momence & Yellowhead, in Illinois into which they empty can no longer carry the water, the Illinois district has enjoined the upper district from further dumping; in self defense Indiana now proposes to carry their ditch south into the Williams ditch and thence into the river at the Town of Lake County Club at mile 45.5.

With the river filled with sand from this point to Momence as it is this can afford them no relief and this program will encounter a lot of opposition from the City of Momence and the Rivermen. But if the river can be first cleared, these parties will have no objections.

It is no longer a question of time when something will have to be done, that moment has arrived.

It will be no little job to be accomplished over nite and any plan proposed must be great enough to scope and vision to cover the various angles regardless of cost and must be of such nature as to warrant the co-operation of all parties concerned, without which no plan can succeed.

This Association feels the schedule as outlined by the U. S. Engineers in House document 784 is basically sound, however roughly outlined, and no doubt some angles of any such plan will be found not economically feasible today but as conditions warrant they can be carried out.

The Association offers:

First, remove the rock ledge at Momence and install a modern flood control dam which can be closed to hold a head of water during the normal stages of the river or opened during flood stages when the farmers and Rivermen need relief from the floods. The height and exact lo-

cation, also type of dam required to be determined by U. S. Engineers—which body alone rates the confidence of the three parties concerned.

It has been said quote "The State of Illinois must oppose the removal of the rock ledge—unless adequate control works are substituted to maintain All flows as they are now controlled by the natural topography, now THIS SUGGESTS THE SPENDING OF MONEY FOR SOMETHING THAT WILL PRODUCE NO CHANGE IN NATURAL CONDITIONS."

We challenge this statement and contend this will provide a very great change in the natural condition, we qualify the quotation; it is not expected to maintain ALL flows as they are now. The dam will be opened to let the flood waters get away before damage has been done to the farm lands and resorts, these floods are never of long duration the gates would be closed gradually to maintain a head of water. Momence and the Rivermen and the thousands of City dwellers who each year make this their playground headquarters will have a beautiful stream in and out of town where now are useless, unsightly rapids.

The farmers above with their million and a half dollar investment and their farms at stake will take hope of heart, the Rivermen with their million dollar investment, who need flood relief as well as the farmers, will benefit. Also the 50 families in East Momence, now annually flooded.

Second: With this accomplished, we believe work on the river above the ledge would be feasible and economically justified.

We offer in lieu of the straightening proposition this plan:

Cut off the bad points of the land as shown on the map, reopen some of the old channels, now silted up, clean the main channel with a sandsucker dredge; at nearly every location of bad bars there is, now practically worthless, land available for the dumping of the sand. Landowners have been contacted for these

rights of way and have promised co-operation.

Open seven of the thirteen spans of the Milwaukee bridge, remove the two boulder moraines as shown on the map.

We feel this will provide flowage for any or all waters as needed and will result in the reopening of our bayous and sloughs with its benefits to conservation, fish and wildfowl, and still leave us a beautiful, natural stream, not a dredge ditch.

This Association has contacted farmers, Rivermen, townsmen and Sportsman's clubs and to date has met with an enthusiastic response and offer to co-operate on this plan.

All thru the reports and recommendations of Document 784 runs the question, who would pay for such if and when done.

In 1927 a conservancy district was promoted at Momence for the building of a dam, put to a vote it carried by a seven-eighths majority; it was killed by the drainage districts; this new dam and plan has the approval of these people and we propose the forming of such district to pay for the cost of the dam \$50,000 or more if necessary. Momence and the Rivermen can handle this.

As to the rock work this would have to be mostly hand power and we ask the Government to give us the labor, we promise campsites and facilities for 10,000 men or more, together with a storage space for the 393,000 yards of rock, which will ultimately be crushed and used on roads in the district. It could also be crushed and used for the concrete work in the building of the dam. Also for soil sugar for the farms. A great part of the earth excavations on the river could be done by this type of labor. Where is a more worthy project?

We feel that with this, the big end of the job, done in Illinois that the cleaning of the channel itself can be worked out with further co-operation of all parties concerned.

A few quotes from the reports and recommendations in Document 784.

By Lytle Brown, Major General, Chief of Engineers, War Department, office of Engineers, Washington:

Quote "Destructive floods do not occur on the Kankakee River below Mokence, Illinois."

The District Engineer is of the opinion that further works for the control of floods, reclamation of Marshlands and improvement of drainage are justified.

"That a project for reducing floods and facilitating drainage by channel enlargement and bridge alternation is economically justified."

"Further improvement of the river would have no material effect upon the floods of the Mississippi River."

By W. C. Weeks, Lt. Colonel, Corps of Engineers, District Engineer, Chicago:

"The combined procedure of lowering the rock ledge at Mokence, straightening four bends, and deepening the river between Mokence and the State Line, and deepening the present channel from the State Line to Brems for the purpose of flood control and drainage is economically justified."

A certain gentleman of Kankakee has filed strenuous objections to any work on the River at and East of Mokence, ostensibly from a conservation standpoint; that it will ruin the natural beauty of the stream.

Now this gentleman is connected with the Lehigh Stone Company located just west of Kankakee whose business is quarrying and crushing limestone for road building, soil sugar and the various purposes to which lime stone may be put.

Lets break down into dollars and cents the 393,000 yards of rock to be removed from the ledge at Mokence.

2,600 pounds, 1.3 tons per yard equal 510,900 tons at \$1.40 per ton \$715,260 and representing 393 miles of 8 foot roads at 1,000 yards per mile. The removal of this amount of business would put a crimp in any stone company's annual sales or business. Perhaps the gentleman is also in-

terested in this proposition from a financial standpoint as regards the Lehigh Stone Company.

We wonder if he has ever contacted the old time rivermen for their opinions, men who have lived and shot and fished on this stream all their lives, yes, and paid taxes for the building and maintaining of roads built of Lehigh stone.

This report is made by rivermen who actually live on this stretch of water, representing the owners of property thereon and among these are men of varied experiences, most have spent their lifetime here, one old Mississippi River steamboat pilot has been here over 35 years. He should be a capable judge of navigation and flood problems. Others have operated hunting and fishing camps and summer resorts for up to 50 years making their homes at the very water edge.

These men are PRACTICAL conservationists, they know the stream and all join in saying, the time has come when something must be done if we expect to have a river.

This plan represents their composite report.

We have spoken of the three parties vitally interested in the river at and East of Mokence. It now appears a Fourth or new party has arrived on the scene.

It seems there is a move on hand to promote a State Park some nine miles in extent centering on Rock Creek below Kankakee. Interests backing this promotion oppose the removal of the rock ledge at Mokence as it might flood their proposed park or interfere for some obscure reason. Some of the quotations given might relieve their anxiety.

This park would contain about 2,000 acres, a great part of it already owned by the Power Company. One small tract acquired by condemnation brought \$500 per acre establishing that as a basic price for the whole acreage required, around a million dollars. If the benefits to be derived from a project to protect the nine hundred thousand acres of farms, the City of Mokence and the mil-

lion dollars in cold cash Rivermen have invested East of Mokence should be deemed not economically feasible, what about a commercial scheme for an unneeded State Park to be paid for by the taxpayers of Illinois in order that the Power Company may build a 50 foot power dam for their own benefit and control the waters of a lake paid for by the taxpayers.

It is more probable the Power Company feel their supply would be curtailed by letting out the Spring floods on the Kankakee marshes draining their reservoir. However, they will have their 50 foot dam so let them impound their own water in their own reservoir, why expect a valley of 2340 square miles with its millions of dollars of valuations to continue to act as a holding ground for the benefit of the fuel of a Commercial Institution interested solely in its own selfish ends.

Nature has done well with the rock ledge as a natural weir in regulating the flow of the river, however, man is constantly improving on Nature. A flood control dam at Mokence would doubtless be worthy of its name in controlling the situation below as well as above.

A reference recently noted to an Island in the river below Kankakee and the desire to preserve it because it is the home of a rare plant, The Globe Mallow—Phymosia Remota—leads us to go into detail a little more on the beauty of the Kankakee River East of Mokence.

Since time immemorial this region has been noted for this very reason.

The Pottawatomie Indians before the day of the white man called it "Ti-yar-ac-ke", "Wonderful Land," "Wonderful River." Indians whose villages were on the banks of the River always in naming their residence would say "Ti-yar-ack-Naunck". "Wonderful Land Home."

Records of LaSalle, the first white man to see the river, 1679, 261 years ago, says he and his companions lingered in the Kankakee valley to enjoy its beauty

and game and fish, there so plentiful.

One hundred years ago Gordon Hubbard on a short trip up the river from the upper crossing—the ford on his famous trail to Fort Dearborn—located a mile east of Mokence remarked:

"I thought I had never before enjoyed the sight of so much natural beauty as met my gaze, of river, woods, and land so delightfully interspersed."

Old Dan Parmeley, who located and named The Garden of Eden, seventy years ago in summing up the beauty of the situation said:

"God only made one country like this and he made it for me."

In 1925, 15 years ago, a local historian writing of this region said:

"There is no more beautiful stretch of river in the entire course of the Kankakee than that which lies between Mokence and the State Line."

And today in spite of the numerous cottages and homes in this region, you step out of your cabin on a dark night, walk a hundred paces and you're lost in the wilderness. Yes, several parties of out of town coon hunters spent the night out last fall because they were lost in the jungle.

The same love of adventure and exploration, characteristic of early explorers from La Salle on down has led people from the cities to gain a homesite for themselves and their children on this natural unspoiled stream of which they are so justly proud.

Perhaps P. Remota does not grow here—but the oak, walnut, butternut, sycamore birch, ash, the spreading elm and many others do, and some of these ancient patriarchs, must have looked down on the cavalier De La Salle, his companions Hennepin and Tonty and their followers 261 years ago.

An infinite variety of smaller shrubs and wild flowers may be found.

Every bird native to this region may be seen at some season of the year.

In the spring, the mallard, pintail, teal, and the wily old Can-

adian goose still stop over, not in clouds to darken the sky or keep one awake nights with their cries as of old, but still enough to show the youngsters, and give them their lessons in natural history.

The beautiful wood duck still nests here, and each summer many of them may be seen.

This organization is well aware that as time goes on, changes must come, but we believe this traditionally beautiful and historic region should be held as closely to its original state as possible. And for the present generation and those to follow, we herewith present our plea.

In a report to the District Engineer in Chicago, Ill., the Kankakee River Preservation Association made the following statement under the subject heading "Discussion of Certain Benefits Under the River Preservation Plan."

PART II

Section I

INTRODUCTION

A. The Kankakee River Preservation Plan, for improvement - Momence to State Line - has been submitted to you in detail. For the purpose of this report, a brief general outline will suffice to clarify our classification of the benefits that will accrue, for Momence to the State Line.

Plan 1. Restoration of the river to its former condition.

2 Cleaning out of sand, opening up bayous, and draining of swamps.

3 Removal of the rock ledge, a natural barrier, and the building of a dam equipped with flood control gates, an artificial barrier, which can be regulated to keep the river in its normal channel. In general, the plan directs the river to follow its natural convolutions, regulates the level, and prevents for the future, the ruining of the river by accumulated sand deposits and the spoiling of its natural beauty.

B. The benefits to be expected as the result of the contemplated

plan are considered from seven (7) different standpoints, or under seven (7) headings in the following discussion:

1. Real Estate
2. Business
3. Flood Control
4. Public Health
5. Recreation
6. Conservation
7. Education

Some slight overlapping is to be expected as it is sometimes difficult to determine whether a specific benefit is confined to one heading or not. We have endeavored not to duplicate in the figures. In other words, we have arbitrarily restricted overlapping benefits to one or another of the headings and have not duplicated.

Section II

DISCUSSION

Since the object of this report is to set forth the economic justification of the work, it is evident that the measure of the benefits to be derived and the accuracy of the resulting estimate, will depend considerably on the choice of an appropriate yard-stick.

Since the basis will be different in each individual case, we can make at this point no general comment, except to say that the theory upon which each benefit is estimated, or the method by which each benefit is estimated, will be given in the discussion under each the separate headings.

1 REAL ESTATE:

The measure of benefits under this heading is set forth in detail in the tabulation which follows:

This tabulation is based on estimated lowering of the flood plane as set forth in Document 784 House of Representatives, 71st Congress, also known as the 308 report. It shows the benefits to be derived on the Kankakee River in Illinois (Momence to State Line) if the river is improved according to the suggestions by maps of the Kankakee River Preservation Association submitted to the War Department through your office.

3000 additional homesites will be made available and also 4500

acres of fine timber land will be freed from floods. A total estimated valuation of \$1,350,000.00 based on sales of like property in the past.

It should be pointed out that this is additional, over and above present value of the property and the cost of sales.

This benefit does not include the unestimated value to over 20,000 acres of agricultural lands in Yellowhead and Pembroke Drainage Districts and the 900,000 acres over in Indiana, which has been gone into separately in reports by Farm organizations. And furthermore, no attempt is made to calculate a benefit that will most certainly appear over the course of years, but which cannot be estimated here, namely, the appreciation in value of the property as the years go by. It can be seen that the value we have assigned is the benefit that will be created immediately upon the completion of the work contemplated in the plan. It is quite possible, judging from past experience, that the property might easily double in value by the end of the fifty (50) year period.

It should be pointed out that this includes only land benefits. In addition to this, it might be mentioned that our survey has revealed that the labor and material of each cottage has cost on the average of \$600.00; plumbing \$70.00; electric light and appliances \$100.00; garages \$75.00; boat houses and private landings \$50.00; approximately sixty (60) miles of private and public roads; as well as some gardening, landscaping, grading, etc., (in an indeterminate amount) all of which materially swells the real estate benefits beyond the figure carried in our total.

There are at present 800 cottages along this portion of the river. Due to the flood conditions these 800 represent the maximum development that can now be done. These 800 are on the more favorable locations, but even so, it has been found that about twenty-five (25) per cent are inaccessible for about twenty-five (25) per cent of the season. There are over seventy (70) per cent of

the present property owners who have been unable to make seasonal use of boating, swimming, and such facilities because of the flood condition. It is the stated opinion of competent river men that because of accumulated sand, debris, and other objectional features (to be enumerated below) another few years without improvement will see an even greater loss of use and further deterioration of the river facilities from both recreational and floodway standpoints.

As an example of the objectional features we enumerate:

1. Snags, floating and submerged trees, etc., which are carried down during flood water and remain as objections.

2. Floating logs, trees, etc., that come down during high water when the river is out of its banks completely; damaging fences, homes, and landscaping, often completely wrecking out-buildings, porches, etc.

3. Pools of stagnant water, decaying vegetation, rotten logs, etc., that are swept in shore, remaining hundreds of feet back from the normal river as nuisances the rest of the year.

Real estate benefits were mentioned first, but the several headings are arbitrarily numbered and the order does not represent their position in importance.

Here is an example of overlapping. While this real estate benefit represents an increase in property value, it is not on agricultural land or other productive investments, but is on land which by its very nature and location on the river, will always be recreational and vocational in character.

The moral, spiritual, and physical benefits to the thousands of Americans, both young and old, holding a part in this type of land ownership cannot be estimated in dollars and cents.

2. BUSINESS

During our survey for this report, the business men of Mokence were consulted and we use the figures they submitted as a yard-stick for the business

benefits to be derived from this project. Data was gathered from two view points.

A. Present business that is now enjoyed which stands a good chance of being lost if the plan is not carried out, and;

B. Increased business that may be expected to result from the river improvement:

A. Present Business: There are now approximately eight thousand (8000) family week-ends spent in the cottages and summer houses on the Kankakee River between Mokence and the State Line. Our survey indicates that the average expenditure for each family week-end is \$4.00 for food, gasoline, movies, etc., and this brings \$32,000.00 per year into town. Assuming that approximately six (6) per cent or about \$2,000.00 of this is profit, it represents the average income of three (3) families now established here, but, the more significant point is that \$32,000.00 has been added to the purchasing power and wages of the Mokence merchants without which it is entirely possible that they would not be able to maintain their present business standards. In other words, the effect of this additional business resulted in a unit lowering of the overhead due to a greater spread and more units, hence, the benefit is so far reaching that the \$32,000.00 probably represents somewhere near twice that amount or \$64,000.00 that would be lost if the \$32,000.00 were lost.

In the case of one grocery man consulted who keeps accurate records, his share gave him a turnover of something like seven (7) times a year, whereas, without this business referred to it would probably not have averaged two (2) times a year. And, the significant point is that the present business setup, buildings, fixtures, employees, delivery facilities, etc., are on a basis of this additional turnover and without it the entire structure would have to be materially altered if not abandoned.

We think, therefore, the business men are entirely justified in claiming a benefit of twice the

yearly profit estimate of \$4,000 if the sites and facilities, now not usable, are made available to transients. This for fifty (50) years would be \$200,000.00.

B. Increase: We did not include the eight hundred (800) residents under heading (A) above. Neither will we include the additional transients under heading (B). The additional number of families being three thousand (3,000) (see heading No. 1) and these as property owners or residents, we would have three thousand (3,000) families times fifteen week-ends (average time spent here by owners) or forty-five thousand (45,000) family week-ends. Our survey shows that such resident families spend nearly twice the average given for the occasional transient enumerated above. Therefore, we have 45,000 family week-ends times \$7.00 per week-end, times 50 years, which gives \$15,570,000 and six (6) per cent of this, as a reasonable profit, gives \$945,000.00.

This is a total of \$1,145,000.00 under this heading and it may be argued that if this money does not come here it will go somewhere else, and hence, is not a valid benefit from the standpoint of the country as a whole. We maintain that even if the entire amount is not considered a legitimate benefit, taken in conjunction with the other factors in the whole project, at least a substantial part should be considered. Because the fact remains that this particular heading includes the consideration of possible and even probably great loss if the plan does not go through and while benefits may go to some other localities the loss would be entirely ours.

3. FLOOD CONTROL:

Since the river was dredged and straightened in Indiana, the water has had nothing to hold it back except the accumulated sand bars and the rock ledge between Mokence and the Illinois-Indiana state line. During the high water stages, these obstructions force the river out of its banks, flooding many thousand acres of land and isolating many homes.

During the spring floods twenty-five (25) per cent of the people are kept out of their homes for twenty-five (25) per cent of the summer season. We have consulted several property owners with regards to the measure of benefits that will result from the elimination of this situation and they state that they are now losing twenty-five (25) per cent of their investment each year.

Twenty-five (25) per cent of the three thousand (3,000) families, seven hundred fifty (750) families are kept out of their homes during the spring floods. The investment is \$300.00 per lot; cottage \$600.00; plumbing \$70.00; electric light and appliances \$100; garages \$75.00; landings \$50.00; making a total investment of \$1,195.00. Twenty-five (25) per cent of this is \$296.25, times seven hundred fifty (750) families that are kept out of their home each season, equals \$222,087.50 the net amount of investment that the people are losing. We believe this is a fair measure of the benefits that would accrue for full season use of the properties as a result of the flood control or \$222,087.50, would accrue just from this increased availability alone, and does not include an estimate of the saving from damage done to homes and landscaping, due to high water.

4. HEALTH:

By cleaning out and opening the channel and bayous, stagnant water breeding areas for *Anopheles Maculipennis*, the malaria mosquito, will be decreased, hence to a great extent eliminating the season of aches and shakes.

Such measures should increase the rate of flow of the stream, and thereby increase the dilution factor so that sewage and organic waste matter will be more rapidly oxidized and rendered less harmful from the health standpoint.

Cleaning out the stream will remove the decaying vegetable matter and prevent the odor nuisance that such a condition produces.

During our survey we interviewed the doctors in this terri-

tory and their figures are as follows:

(a) One hundred (100) cases malaria times two because this disease re-occurs the following year, times \$35.00 cost of treatment including hospitalization, tests, medicine, etc., equals \$7,000.00.

(b) One thousand (1,000) cases of abscesses and infections, due to the low dilution factor, times \$5.00, the cost of consultation and treatment, equals \$5,000.00.

(c) Seven hundred fifty (750) cases cuts and bruises from swimming and diving into obstructions, etc., times \$5.00 for medical attention, equals \$3,750.00.

The total of these items is \$15,750.00 times fifty (50) years is \$787,500.00. In as much as the doctors are unanimous that it would be expecting too much to have these difficulties entirely eliminated, we have asked them to make an estimate, and the consensus was that it would certainly be cut in half. This gives us the figures of \$393,750.00.

This figure does not include drownings, due to changes in sand bars, such minor things as treatments to remove leaches, wash out eyes, treatment for ticks, chiggers, etc., which are not applicable.

5 RECREATION

The activities under this classification are almost too numerous to mention, therefore, we have included in our survey only the more representative. We have omitted horseback riding, archery, shooting, hiking, golfing, aquaplaning and many others.

The boating would be a considerable item as our survey show that practically one hundred (100) per cent own boats of some kind, the average value of which we have determined at \$300.00. Of course, boating, swimming, and fishing are all limited under the present condition of the river, flood and low water periods, sand bars, and other obstructions. An item not mentioned under health, is that bathers report irritation of eyes, ears, and throat after being in the river, probably due to sand in suspension during certain periods.

In spite of these conditions, there are water pageants and boat regattas held each year which draw thousands of people from a large area.

What is now useless waste land, due to floods, will be available space for public parks and beaches to be used for recreational purposes.

Our survey disclosed, after questioning hundreds of vacationists in this region, that there are many Americans looking for recreational advantages that can be enjoyed for the entire season at the cost of an occasional week-end or a one-week vacation. They will (and can) take advantage of these facilities here, as soon as they are available. There are guests in most of the summer cottages, guests not fortunate enough to own their own summer cottages, every week-end. The free beaches and park facilities which this project will make available make it possible for great numbers of people to leave the crowded city areas for better health and wholesome recreation throughout the summer season.

Recreation, more of it, at the same cost, and of the proper kind, produces intangible benefits, benefits to the soul of a nation.

There are good highways, railroad and bus facilities in all directions making it possible for transients to enjoy the recreational opportunities of this section of the river at low cost.

We have consulted with various people who take vacations where they can enjoy swimming and boating facilities of the same scope and character as would be attainable if the plan were carried out.

We find that it costs an average of \$25.00 per family. The people along the river are not, generally speaking, those who could spend this amount and consequently do not enjoy these privileges. However, as residents along the reconditioned river they would be able to enjoy these facilities and, therefore, we think it is entirely legitimate to set up the amount of \$1,875,000.00 or about an average of one thousand five hundred (1,500) families, times fifty (50)

years times \$25.00 as the benefit that would accrue to these people.

It might be further pointed out as another method of arriving at the measure of the recreational benefits, that the capital cost of providing such facilities otherwise would in themselves run into a considerable figure. For instance at least \$75,000.00 for a swimming pool, and according to estimate about three times that or \$225,000.00 for a canoe basin to which must be added \$3,000.00 annual maintenance charges and costs of operation.

Since these facilities (or their equivalent) will be automatically provided, and provided in much better fashion, as a part and parcel of the river work, or resulting therefrom, it would seem perfectly logical to say that this figure of \$300,000.00 plus \$150,000 maintenance costs, was a legitimate benefit even if the former alternative figure were not allowed.

Several individuals who were consulted on this matter seemed to think that it was not a question of an alternative but that both the measures should be added together and the total presented. We take however, only our original figure \$1,875,000.00.

6 CONSERVATION:

This area meets all the requirements for a part in the very intensive conservation program being undertaken by the government. The entire appropriation could be considered under this heading alone, and be thoroughly justified.

This section of the Kankakee River is in the migratory bird trough. Every spring and fall, the migratory birds, from the game birds to the warblers, pass through here in great numbers. They have stopped here for weeks, but as cultivation has removed many of the natural haunts, river banks have crumbled and taken away many of the largest and oldest trees, floods have kept other natural haunts inundated for long periods of time, their stop overs have become shorter and shorter. Flood conditions have made this once great nesting site undesirable for

these species, native to this section, and which did nest here in large numbers. Every species of bird, whose natural migratory routes pass through here has been identified, and in great numbers.

It is not necessary to point out to a conservation-conscious government, the importance of saving these birds by conserving their natural resting haunts and nesting sites. The benefits to agriculture alone cannot be estimated, to say nothing of the benefits to our forests.

The newspaper files from nearby towns show what this migratory trough once had to offer. Thousands of birds of all description were hunted and killed here and shipped to markets all over the country. These newspaper items boast of the plover, snipe, ducks, geese, robins, wood ducks, and a long list of others shipped from here in astonishing numbers. The furs which were trapped here have not been mentioned. The same species of fur-bearing animals still consider this their natural habitat.

The reopening of the bayous will be one of the greatest benefits for fish and wildfowl that has ever been done, making feeding and nesting grounds for the ducks and spawning grounds for the fish.

Preventing the bottoms from flooding will save thousands of fish which annually are trapped in small pot holes in the woods and then die as the water recedes in the summer months leaving only a sun caked mud hole.

This stream once teemed with fish and wildlife and was a joyous, sparkling stream, today just enough remains to serve as a monument of what it was in the days of its glory.

In fact, this project, if carried out, will give us a live, healthy river, instead of the dieing one we now have.

One example by which conservation may be evaluated can be cited, the maintenance of nature's balance as between pests and their natural enemies, the snakes, birds, etc. Quite apart from in-

sects like mosquitoes there are pests such as tree borers and rodents whose natural enemies are some of these very forms of life which are being eliminated by floods.

A bird requires approximately four times his own weight of food each day. It is impossible to estimate (Conservation Department of United States has figures) insects and weeds that these birds eat.

A bull snake will eat three or four field mice a day. Field mice are responsible for considerable destruction of alfalfa, clover, growing grass, grain, seeds, bulbs, root crops, and garden vegetables in the spring and summer, and in the fall to grain as they congregate in large numbers under shocks of grain to feed. In the winter they do on enormous injury to young and even to well grown fruit and other trees by gnawing off the bark at the base of trunk and roots.

Authorities differ as to the actual money value to be assigned to the damage per mouse or per rat. One government bulletin cites a complete loss of 18,000 acres of alfalfa from field mice. If this land produced two tons per acre, and establishing \$9.00 as the average market price, this loss was \$324,000.00.

Another figure obtained from the Agriculture Department states that each field mouse costs a farmer \$1.50 per year. The conservation of one natural enemy of field mice (the bull snake) alone would mean therefore, the destruction of four hundred fifty (450) field mice, assuming the snake feeds from May to October.

We have 20,000 acres of land in Illinois, alone to consider in this survey and if each acre has one mouse, times \$1.50 for the damage done each year times fifty years equals \$1,500,000.00. It is not argued by any conservationist that these pests are ever eliminated entirely by their enemies. The significant point, however, is that in this belt the balance has been considerably upset and with the improvement considered in this plan there would be a substantial part of the savings enumerated

made and it does not seem unreasonable that a modest ten (10) per cent improvement would be too optimistic. This gives a benefit of \$150,000.00 on one item, field mice.

Tree borers and other such pests can ruin a tree or twelve to fifteen hundred board feet of lumber in a couple of years. Each such tree is worth \$35.00 and fruit trees are worth several times that much or an estimate of \$150. If there are five of each kind of tree destroyed each year, this amounts to \$925.00, times fifty years or \$46,250.00. We think that we are being fair in estimating that this loss will be cut in half, by conserving the birds (natural enemies of tree borers) or a total benefit of \$23,225.00.

We feel it is not unreasonable to say that after the work is completed and the effects begin to be noticed an increase in such birds, snakes, etc. would naturally be noticed. The total of the two benefits given above is \$173,225.00.

It takes, however, such a project as considered in this plan, to give the necessary conservation attention; no individual, or group of individuals, is big enough to combat the conditions prevalent here, due to lack of control and care of the river.

History and early descriptions of this area are undisputable evidence of what it once was, and, what it can again be for the generations of Americans to come, if conservation of this area is granted.

7. EDUCATION:

Education and conservation are so closely associated that it is difficult to say where one leaves off and the other begins. But this region has such great possibilities for educational opportunities that it cannot be overlooked or just lumped under conservation.

In the Field Museum in Chicago, students from all over the country study specimens of birds and plants which have been collected in this area. In the zoos in St. Louis, New York, and Chicago are fine specimens of reptiles which have been found here.

Botanists, of note, have located stations of plants exceeding in

size and perfection of any heretofore found.

Pin-oaks, river birches, and dozens of other trees reach a growth and development not exceeded any place in the United States. Every year the river takes its toll of these trees, and a small local group cannot stop it.

Field trips for the study of animals, reptiles, birds, plants, and trees, by schools, colleges, and nature groups are now conducted, but under extremely trying conditions, such as high water, flooded areas, stagnant pools. This is a great educational field.

This plan contemplates the development of all educational facilities and opportunities, the maintaining of the natural beauty, and the conservation of the natural resources—game, fish, birds, and flora.

Statistics quoted often show that it cost \$9.00 per month to educate a grade or high school student and \$18.00 for a college student or an average of \$13.50 per month. If each student takes six (6) subjects during the year there is a monthly cost of \$2.25 per student, per subject. It has been said, by educators, that one field trip equals a months study of the subject in a school room.

The survey further shows that there have been an average of twenty (20) student in each group visiting this section. There are twenty eight (28) weeks in the field trip season, times three (3) trips per week, times fifty (50) years, times \$2.25 gives us a total of \$189,000.00.

Using this figure for the educational benefit is perhaps arbitrary because it leaves out of consideration the educational benefit that accrues to those who are residents of this district, for whom an additional benefit could reasonably be assigned.

There are three thousand (3,000) families, average two (2) children to each family will be six thousand (6,000) children. During the fifty (50) year period, and taking the average population figure, each child will have two (2) children, making a total of eighteen thousand (18,000). These eighteen thousand (18,000) chil-

dren will receive the educational benefit of one field trip on three (3) nature subjects.

What they will learn about the three subjects, birds, animals and flora will certainly be more than what they would gain by just one field trip on each of these subjects in that fifty year period.

Three (3) times \$2.25 per trip, times 18,000 people is \$121,500 which represents the educational benefit to residents as distinguished from visitors.

Therefore, we have carried the sum of the two residents and visitors to our summary under this heading or \$289,500.00.

PART III

ENDORSEMENTS

This project has been endorsed by many very active groups in this region, among them: The Rivermen, The Kankakee Valley Association, The Momence and Pembroke Union Drainage District No. 1, The Momence-Yellowhead Drainage District No. 1, The Momence Sportsmens Club, The city Council of Momence, The Chamber of Commerce of Momence, Sumava Resorts Inc., Lake and Newton Counties Indiana, and many prominent land owners in Indiana, the American Legion post of Momence, and more coming in every day as the plan becomes better known.

For the first time in history these organizations show a united front on a River project and this certainly speaks for success.

OBJECTIONS:

In concluding this Part III it might be well to discuss some objections that might be raised. The objections, we anticipate, will arise, in general, not so much from the merits of the propositions, or the benefits above discussed, but rather from the standpoint of the yard-stick applied to measure them. We have endeavored to be perfectly frank in this matter. We have exercised our best judgment, we feel we have been over conservative, and the statements are under statements rather than over statements

in the sense that we have tried to not let our enthusiasm carry us away.

PART IV

RECAPITULATION:

1. Real Estate	\$1,350,000.00
2. Business	1,145,000.00
3. Floor Control	222,087.50
4. Health	393,750.00
5. Recreation	1,875,000.00
6. Conservation	173,225.00
7. Education	289,500.00

Estimated 50 year total \$5,448,562.50

This shows a total of \$5,448,562.50 benefits, which would justify the cost of a substantial expenditure in comparison with the 308 report.

All this without taking into consideration the benefits to farm lands which have been gone into very thoroughly in separate reports to the War Department by the farm organizations and which run into a great deal more money than the totals already shown in this report.

Based on 15 cents benefit per acre for the 900,000 acres would mean \$6,750,000.00 and this would be ultra-conservative and then show a grand total of \$12,198,562.50.

We believe this would justify the spending of two and a half million dollars as estimated in the 308 report and respectfully ask you for a favorable report on the project.

Respectfully submitted.

THE KANKAKEE RIVER PRESERVATION ASSOCIATION

NEIL METCALF, President

