### T dams are transportation infrastructure

Dams are transportation infrastructure – they make the rivers navigable

(not for flood control)

ACE 12 Army Corps of Engineers, St Paul District 2-8-12 Mississippi Locks and Dams http://www.mvp.usace.army.mil/navigation/default.asp?pageid=145

To achieve a 9-foot channel in the Upper Mississippi River, the construction of a system of navigation locks and dams was authorized in 1930. Dams are built on rivers to hold back water and form deeper navigation "pools." Most pools in the United States are maintained at a constant minimum water depth of 9 feet for safe navigation. Dams allow river vessels to use a series of locks to "step" up or down the river from one water level to another.

The Corps operates the locks and dams on the Mississippi River for navigation, not flood control. The locks and dams create slack-water pools for navigation during periods of low- and moderate-level water. For each pool, there is a primary control point, where a predetermined water elevation must be kept for navigation to continue.

ACE 12 Army Corps of Engineers, Pittsburgh District 7-20-12 Navigation

<http://www.lrp.usace.army.mil/nav/nav.htm>

Navigation structures are necessary to make inland waterways viable, year-round transportation corridors.  Prior to the construction of the locks and dams in the region, some river depths were less than 12 inches at times during the year and would not support commercial or pleasure boat traffic.

The natural river beds are long, uneven downhill slopes with shallow areas and deep pools. Without improvement, the depth of the water in the river would vary with seasonal rainfall and the shallow areas of the river would obstruct navigation in dry periods.

The dams which the Corps has constructed create an “aquatic staircase” in the river and prevent the river from draining in dry weather, so navigation can go on year-round.  Each step on the slope of the riverbed is a pool of water extending miles upstream, maintaining sufficient depth for boats and barges.  The normal flow of the river runs through these pools and the excess flows over the dam into the next pool and on down the river. However, these dams do **not** provide flood protection.