(d) *GREAT* refers to studies conducted by Great River Environmental Action Teams pursuant to section 117 of the Water Resources and Development Act of 1976 (Pub. L. 94–587) for purposes of developing balanced management strategies for multipurpose use of the Upper Mississippi River.

(e) *System* means those Upper Mississippi River reaches containing commercial navigation channels on the Mississippi River main stem north of Cairo, Illinois; the Minnesota River, Minnesota; Black River, Wisconsin; Saint Croix River, Minnesota and Wisconsin; Illinois River and Waterway, Illinois; and Kaskaskia River, Illinois.

(f) *Public meeting* means a meeting to provide individuals and representatives of interested organizations opportunities to present their opinions and suggestions by means of an informally structured format.

(g) *Public hearing* means a formally structured public meeting scheduled to provide adequate time for each testimony, which will be recorded, transcribed, published, and made available to the public.

§ 708.2 Scope.

(a) This part describes minimum guidelines for public participation in the development, revision, and implementation of the Master Plan specified in the Act.

(b) This part applies to the following organizations with references to the activities described in § 708.2(a):

(1) The Commission, including its staff and persons, organizations, and agencies under contract to it for work within the scope of the Master Plan.

(2) Such Federal departments and agencies as are directed under section 101(3) of the Act to conduct studies pursuant to the Master Plan, for any work carried out for purposes of developing, revising, and implementing the Master Plan.

(3) Such departments and agencies of any state or local government as are authorized and/or directed to carry out studies and analyses under direction or advice of the Commission as stipulated in section 101 of the Act.

(c) The guidelines referred to in this part shall be considered general requirements applicable to all studies, procedures, programs, regulations, or other administrative devices carried out under § 708.2(b), but only for those Master Plan Activities under authority of the Act.

§ 708.3 Policy, objectives, and standards.

(a) *Policy*. (1) Congress has directed the Commission to prepare a comprehensive Master Plan for management of the System in cooperation with appropriate Federal, state, and local officials. In developing the plan, the Commission is required to identify various economic, recreational, and environmental objectives of the System, recommend guidelines to achieve such objectives, and propose methods to assure compliance with such guidelines and coordination of future management decisions affecting the System, and include with the proposed plan any legislative proposals which may be necessary to carry out such recommendations and achieve such objectives.

(2) The Commission is required to provide for public participation in the development, revision, and implementation of the Master Plan and to encourage and assist such participation. In doing this, the Commission seeks to foster a spirit of openness and a sense of mutual trust between the public and the planners. Public participation is expected to result in greater responsiveness of the Master Plan to public concerns and priorities, as well as improved popular understanding of official studies, planning processes, and decisions.

(3) In order for public participation to be effective, it must be timely and integrated into the planning process. The Commission shall seek public participation prior to any decision-making on the Master Plan or any of its components. Such public participation will ordinarily include informational output about the plan, public response and input, two-way discussions or exchange, and Commission consideration of public expressions.

(4) Neither the Master Plan as a whole nor any component of it shall be formulated without incorporation of a program of public participation involving fair representation of all segments of the public. The public participation

section of the Master Plan—Plan of Study shall be developed consistent with the guidelines described in this part.

(5) Public participation processes utilized by the Commission in developing the Master Plan shall aim for the highest achievable standards of objectivity and thoroughness consistent with other requirements of the Act and the intent, concepts, ideas, and basic tenets of the Principles and Standards for Planning Water and Related Land Resources published by the Water Resources Council in the FEDERAL REGISTER, Volume 38, Number 174, Part III, September 10, 1973 and any forthcoming revisions. Public participation programs shall include monitoring procedures to maintain an acceptable degree of responsiveness and accountability.

(b) *Objectives*. Objectives of the public participation program developed by the Commission as part of the Master Plan are:

(1) To develop awareness of public preferences by those responsible for preparation and approval of the Master Plan.

(2) To anticipate and help resolve conflicts arising during the study,

(3) To improve information transfer and public awareness of the study,

(4) To provide for periodic reviews in the development of the Master Plan as well as the final review required by the Act, and

(5) To provide for evaluation of public participation in the planning process.

(c) *Standards*. The Commission in meeting the above objectives recognizes that:

(1) Inputs from the public are important for development of the Master Plan;

(2) Participants are to include individual citizens as well as organizations;

(3) The public participation program is to assume the existence of numerous publics and their interests—identified and delineated according to a number of socioeconomic, demographic, geographic, person, and ideological variables;

(4) The public participation process must be continuous: it is to be provided for, encouraged, and assisted throughout the planning process;

(5) The public participation process is to have as a product measurable sets of opinion and other manifestations of the public will in regard to details of the Master Plan;

(6) Inputs from the public into the Master Plan through avenues other than the Commission public participation program should be facilitated; and

(7) Desires expressed by the public are likely to be conflicting and therefore, public participation cannot be substituted for the decision-making responsibility.

§ 708.4 Required programs and reports.

(a) The Commission shall prepare a work plan for public participation as part of the Master Plan—Plan of Study. The work plan shall satisfy minimum standards described in this part. The work plan shall describe all substantive administrative and management arrangements to elicit public participation, shall delineate Commission member and staff responsibilities, and shall identify budgetary provisions.

(b) In addition to public meetings and hearings, the public participation program shall include survey research, program evaluation, and information/education activities as described in § 708.5.

(c) The Commission shall recommend long-term public participation activities and programs related to implementation of the Master Plan. These recommendations shall be based on evaluation of procedures and results mandated in this part and carried out during the Master Plan preparation.

(d) The Commission shall issue reports describing the participation program as developed or implemented during the designated reporting period. Each such report shall include as a minimum a brief description of the main participation elicited, the costs of the effort, and the use that was made of the elicited information in the planning process. The reporting periods shall be arranged so as to correspond generally with the main sequential segments of the overall planning process.