

CEMVP-CO-MR

27 August 1999

MEMORANDUM FOR Record

SUBJECT: Minutes of River Resources Forum Meeting #54, 20 April 1999

1. Introductions / Approve Minutes – A meeting of the River Resources Forum (RRF) was held on 20 April 1999 at the Wisconsin State Office Building in La Crosse, WI. An attendance list is attached. *Introductions were made and the minutes of the River Resources Forum Meeting #53 were approved with the following changes: changed FFR to RRF in Section I.*

2. Agency Activities

COE – Dean Peterson introduced Rolando Serrano who is working in a developmental program within the Corps; he is working in Leon Mucha's position. Leon is also working in the developmental program. On 21 April MG Anderson will tour the Mississippi River Project Office (MRPO) in Fountain City; he is touring select MVD sites to prepare for a briefing he must present to General Ballard. On 23 May, there will be an official tour of the UMR by the Assistant Secretary of the Army and the Secretary of the Interior and a meeting held on 24 May. On 18 June there will be a rededication (open house) of the Visitor Center at Upper St. Anthony Falls Lock & Dam in Minneapolis. On 09 July (in conjunction with Catfish Days in Trempealeau, WI) there will be a dedication (open house) at Lock & Dam #6. From 19 – 25 August the M/V Mississippi will be in the St. Paul District on its low-water inspection tour.

St. Mary's – Rory Voss discussed St. Mary's watershed monitoring program.

WDNR – Terry Moe discussed power line crossing issues on the St. Croix River; the power company will be applying for a permit. Public review of the St. Croix River's Masterplan in May/June.

IDNR – Mike Griffin reported that there is a new director, Paul Johnson (replaced Larry Wilson). Larry Wilson is now the assistant director.

MDOT – Dick Lambert reported the new commissioner would be focusing on light rail transit. He also noted that the new commissioner is also interested in the river.

MWBAC – Jim Harrison reported that their budget has been cut by MN and cut out of WI. Currently in process of justifying the BAC. Request assistance from RRF in justifying the BAC. Also seeking help in legislature. Otherwise, business as usual.

WDOT – Ellen Fisher reported that the district engineer retired; Bob Shlasher is acting. Expecting new selection in May 1999.

MPCA – Judy Mader reported that the MPCA is reorganized, however we still have her for river issues. "Sometime" someone will most likely replace her from Rochester.

MDNR – Steve Johnson reported that Allan Garber is the new commissioner. The new deputy commissioner is Steve Morse. Due to Steve Morse's interest in the river, MDNR may focus more on river issues. A mitigation package has been proposed for the Stillwater Bridge.

URS – Lee Nelson reported that the navigation season has begun. So far, only one grounding, however it was not channel related.

USCG – Scott Bates reported that he met with both states regarding “no wake zones” and recreational boating safety. Due to crisis in Kosovo, reservists may be called. Wyaconda is not in the St. Paul District yet and won’t be for a while. Crew from Ft. Snelling has reported to the Wyaconda. USCG and COE have completed the early buoy setting.

USFWS – Very concerned with tow boats tying-off or pushing into EMP structures. Suggestion was made to possibly sign the sensitive areas. COE mentioned that the new mooring buoys are still undergoing some design modifications, which may resolve some of the problems. The NWG will address this issue further. FWS reorganized by ecosystem. Endangered Species Act consultation w/COE. Discussing operating procedures of the 9-foot channel. If there is a significant effect, will go to formal consultation.

3. Recreation Work Group – Jim Harrison

Recreation Boating Study – Handout on budget and agency contributions. Aerial photos will be taken from 29 May – 05 Sept. 1999 (12 flights scheduled; alternate dates already picked). Info collected will be used for navigation study, river uses, beach planning, trends...etc.

Pool 2 Beach Plan – Review is ongoing.

L/D 6 – MDNR will be building a boat ramp above the dam in Pool 6 (old Robers dredge site). Access dredging will be needed.

4. L/D 3 Embankment Study – Gary Palesh

Lengthy discussion on the 675’ elevation of the proposed spillway. 120,000 cy needs to be dredged; 50 to 75,000 cy needs to be removed. Possibly looking for endorsement at Aug. RRF. Will hold public meeting on the details of the project. COE responded to WDNR letter of concerns; WDNR not satisfied with response.; MDNR & FWS also concerned.

5. Fish Passage – Gary Palesh

Gary distributed a memorandum regarding the L/D 3 Embankment Project – Fish Passage. He stated that this is a limited study on fish passage to see if it can be added to the L/D 3 Embankment Project. The feasibility study is to be completed by the end of FY99. Once completed, it will be looked into to see if this could be incorporated as a contract modification or a separate contract. Terry Moe expressed unhappiness with the Corps response to the WDNR’s letter. It was suggested that the FWWG discuss fish passage more.

6. EMP – Don Powell distributed an updated project list. An Engineering, Design, and Construction workshop will be held on 16 & 17 June in La Crosse on Habitat Projects Construction.

7. Channel Maintenance – Dan Krumholz distributed and reviewed handouts on channel maintenance activities and the Pool 5, channel management study.

8. River Mechanics Workshop – Jon Hendrickson distributed and discussed a handout on the workshop scheduled for 27 September in La Crosse.
9. FWWG – Rick Frietsche discussed a potential one-day workshop for non-biologists to be held in mid-August. More details to follow.
10. Water Level Management – Gary Palesh distributed and discussed an updated handout. The Water Level Management Task will be looking for a RRF endorsement following a public review period.
11. Navigation Work Group – Scott Bates discussed happenings at the NWG meeting which was held in Rochester, MN. Scour concerns were discussed along railroad track beds and two new locations were added to the Critical Locations List. The work group is looking into the possibility of signing the sensitive areas. WDOT has a cost-sharing program that could help pay for mooring cells. WDNR & MDNR would like the NWG to pursue permanent mooring structures. On 29 June the NWG will be hosting a railroad embankment stabilization workshop at the Mississippi River Project Office.
12. Other Business
 - Restricted Area Study – The review work will be completed by 01 June. Changes will only occur at L/Ds USAF through L/D 1.
 - Zebra Mussels – WDNR would like to add Zebra Mussels to the next RRF agenda; topics to cover status, monitoring, distribution, impacts...etc.
 - FCSB – PCB clean up is 90% complete; should complete in May/June 1999.
 - Navigation Study – There will be a series of public meetings in August (4 La Crosse, 5 St. Paul).
 - Turning Basin – City of Minneapolis is looking into riverfront development (housing & parks).
 - DM&E Coal Trains – Project is in very early stages; lots of unanswered questions.
13. Next RRF Meetings:
 - 25 Aug (afternoon) - 26 Aug 1999 (morning) Wabasha, MN area.
 - 30 November – 01 December; Bloomington

Dean Peterson
Co-Chairman, RRF