

CEMVP-CO-CH

26 April 2000

MEMORANDUM FOR Record

SUBJECT: Minutes of River Resources Forum Meeting #57, 25 April 2000.

1. Introductions / Approve Minutes – A meeting of the River Resources Forum (RRF) was held on 25 April 2000 in the Kryzsko Commons on the campus of Winona State University. Attached is an attendance list. *Following introductions, the Minutes from RRF #56 were approved with no corrections.*
2. Agency Activities – Note: Only the agencies listed below had significant information to report.
 - MDNR – Scot Johnson for Steve Johnson – Internal reorganization has resulted in Steve supervising more employees; may make it harder to reach him.
 - MPCA – Judy Mader – Introduced Norm Senjem, Lower Mississippi River Basin Coordinator out of Rochester, MN. His focus is on tributary watersheds, waste water treatment...etc. Norm will be attending the RRFs in the future.
 - IDNR – Mike Griffin for Kevin Sczdronski - A cost-sharing Water Quality initiative is coming in the near future.
 - FWS – Rick Frietsche – A reorganization is ahead in the near future. The Trempealeau refuge is currently in a drawdown.
 - MWBAC – Jim Harrison – Jim will be retiring in early 2001; his last RRF will most likely be December 2000. Keith Uhlig will be representing the MWBAC at the RRF meeting. The Gov. of MN has appointed a new commissioner, John Campe. Only one vacancy remains (Wisconsin).
 - MDOT – Dick Lambert – The DOT has not received any operating money yet; may affect road construction throughout the state. Waiting on Port Development money.
 - WDNR – Terry Moe – WDNR met with Corps officials in Madison, WI for a Program Review Meeting. As a result, the agencies will be seeking more Partnering & Cost-sharing opportunities. Working to identify 2001 – 2003 financial resource needs. Pushing for higher Appropriations for FWS & COE O&M dollars.
 - COE – Dean Peterson – John Bailen has replaced Bob Post as Chief of Engineering Division; Ken Buck has replaced Dave Haumersen as Chief of Operations Division. Recent reorganization has Dean Peterson, Dick Otto, and Dan Krumholz as Project Managers in the field.
 - USCG – Scott Bates – Scott will be taking a new position in Washington DC; Jason Neubauer will be Scott's replacement. John Grez will be the new Warrant Officer in La Crosse. License changes for river operations are coming.
3. L/D 3 Embankment – COE - John Bailen. (Handout RRF #57-1)
 - Interagency meeting to be held in May 2000. The COE has CG funds budgeted for FY01 for this project.

Misc. comments/questions:

Jim Harrison stated that the MWBAC would not be able to attend the May meeting, however the meeting should be held anyway. Jim said that he would take this information with him to Wash. DC in May.

Terry Moe (WDNR) stated that the COE would have to rush to get the plans and specs in place in order to meet the FY01 funding. Terry also asked if the outdraft condition was factored into the project (no per John Bailen). Safety has to be more important than \$.

Scot Johnson (MDNR) stated that the project should maintain Pool 3 at its existing elevation.

Gretchen Benjamin (WDNR) asked if this project could be covered under the Avoid / Minimize program.

Lee Nelson (URS) stated that safety is 2nd best too often; we're lucky there were no deaths in the 1993 accident. Lee also stated that the user fees collected are not earmarked for safety. Congressional action is needed for this project. Need legislation changed to include safety benefits (Ellen Fisher (WDOT) 2nd this); both human and environmental.

Ken Buck (COE) stated that the COE has a tough time getting \$ for safety projects. COE HQ supports this project but we have not found a way yet to get the project's costs down and its benefits up; we need to keep working on this. Outdraft is O&M \$ and the embankment is CG \$.

Scot Bates (USCG) stated that the USCG uses flow conditions to determine advisories...etc. Experience is an issue too.

Dick Lambert (MDOT) asked what was different about L/D#3 vs. the rest of the L/D's; we need to correct those problems/differences. Tows used to get backed into the lock.

Gary Wege (FWS) stated that there has to be both structural and non-structural solutions.

4. WLMTF – Gretchen Benjamin (WDNR) and Gary Palesh (Handout RRF #57-2,3, & 4).

There will be a meeting held on 03 May to make a decision to proceed or not with the Pool 8 Pilot Drawdown. On 10 May, the COE will reconfirm the 03 May decision. 01 June is the “drop dead date” for the drawdown.

Recreation access dredging will most likely happen; need WDNR permit, MVD authorization, and \$ cost-share with MWBAC.

MDNR permit has been issued for COE dredging.

Jim Harrison (MWBAC) is concerned about billing locals for work being deferred until 2001.

Terry Moe (WDNR) stated that if this drawdown were a success we would need sponsors to offset costs (i.e. dredging).

Dan Krumholz (COE) stated that there may be dredging in non-historic areas during future drawdowns and that sponsors may be required to fund the additional dredging. Terry Moe (WDNR) stated that this would be challenged in the future.

Dick Otto (COE) stated that there might be possible EMP funding in the future for drawdowns.

Terry MOE (WDNR) wants to make sure that water quality is monitored during drought conditions.

The WLMTF is to report on possible drought condition operations at RRF #58.

The River Resources Forum unanimously endorsed the COE changing the pool operation manual to operate on the "High Side" during winter operations.

5. NWG – Scot Bates (USCG).

February 2000 meeting in Rochester with Railroad and Towing Industries regarding the Railroad Embankment issue. Scot and Paul Machajewski (COE) gave a presentation on the history of the issue. Good discussions, however jurisdictional limitations became a barrier once again. Terry Moe (WDNR) stated that there is COE funding available per Col. Mudd (COE Rock Island). Russ Snyder (COE) will be looking into this. Dan Krumholz (COE) stated that he would follow up with Rock Island on this and report at the Aug RRF.

March 2000 meeting in Fountain City regarding the Mooring Buoy project. Very productive meeting; chose tentative mooring locations for locks 2 – 8 using buoys, cells, and/or shore-wires. Group agreed to go with the safest and least expensive mooring facility if possible at each location. The COE will fund and conduct the environmental surveys and review.

6. RWG – Dick Otto (COE).

St. Mary's Trend Analysis in Pools 7, 8, and 9 cost \$10k. 4 Agencies cost-share (FWS \$4k, rest of the agencies \$2k). Will conduct a Rec. Boating study in Pool 8 if there is a drawdown in 2000.

Beach Plans: Pool 2 Final Draft coming soon; review May 2000; possibly an Aug RRF endorsement. Pools 7 & 8: Public involvement program, possibly an Aug Public meeting, OSIT meetings end of May and early June.

"Bath Tub" Placement Site meeting held 10 April: FWS has many concerns (i.e. public health, safety, and law enforcement...etc).

7. FWWG – Rick Frietsche (FWS) (Handouts RRF #57 – 5).

New HREP project meeting scheduled for 26 April. Land-cover plan for Pools 5 & 9. HNA tie-in meeting scheduled for May. Discussion held on public involvement part of the HREP projects; decision to do biology 1st, then get public involvement/input.

8. Weaver Bottoms Task Force – Eric Nelson (FWS) (Handout RRF#57- 6). Good attendance at the public meeting on 10 February to present the final report. Locals want something done now. Drawdown was highly supported.

Terry Moe (WDNR) requested RRF Endorsement for future modifications to individual features in Weaver Bottoms. *The Corps will pursue Fax endorsement by the RRF for proposed modifications to MN4 and MN5.*

Consensus Endorsement of Weaver Bottoms Final Report.

9. EMP – Don Powell (COE) (Handout RRF#57-7).
Don reviewed the EMP handout.

10. Channel Maintenance Program – Dan Krumholz (COE) (Handouts RRF#57-8,9,10, & 11).
Dan, Steve Tapp (COE), and Paul Machajewski (COE) reviewed the handouts.
Pool 8, Is. 116: Post project evaluations requested for main and side channel.
Pool 5: Weaver & Island Complex meeting planned for May & June respectively.
MN River DMMP: EA & 404(b)1 work continues. Cultural resources field-testing necessary. The Pahl site is not being considered at this time because of cultural resources concerns. Final report for the upper reach (above Hwy 35) will be furnished when environmental work has been completed.
Lower Pool 2: Excavation of islands resumed on 5 April. Judy Mader (MPCA) has not received Water Quality results yet.
Polander: Scheduled to begin 08 May.
Dredging notices are on the St. Paul Districts' Web Site.

11. Hydropower – All.
No new news, however keep on next RRF agenda.

12. Next Meeting
If Pool 8 Drawdown, at WDNR in La Crosse.
If no Pool 8 Drawdown, meet in Trempealeau and tour NWF.

Dean Peterson
Co-Chairman, RRF