

CEMVP-CO-CH

29 April 2003

MEMORANDUM FOR Record

SUBJECT: Minutes of River Resources Forum Meeting #65, 3-4 December 2002.

1. Introductions / Approve Minutes – A meeting of the River Resources Forum (RRF) was held on 3-4 December 2002 at the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge Visitor & Education Center, Bloomington, Mn. Attached is the attendance list and handouts from the meeting.

Following introductions, the Minutes from RRF #64 were approved as prepared.

2. Agency Activities – Note: Only the agencies listed below had significant information to report.

- A. WDNR – Gretchen Benjamin – Terry Moe is retiring in early 2003; thanks again Terry. Terry's position will be filled on an acting basis; can't be filled until next summer; will result in reassignment of work. With the election of a new governor, a new director of WDNR will be appointed in the future.
- B. MPCA - Judy Mader - With the election of a new governor, a new MPCA commissioner will be appointed in the future.
- C. MnDOT – Dick Lambert – With the election of a new governor, a new DOT commissioner will be appointed in the future. Due to budget constraints, travel is still restricted.
- D. NPS - JoAnn Kyril - Currently no DoI budget, maybe at end of year. Regional director, Bill Schank will be moving to Atlanta, unclear of replacement. Opening of Science Museum exhibit scheduled for 8-10 Aug 2003; big event, agencies will be contacted.
- E. FWS - Dan Stinnett – May operate under CRA through FY03. New refuge manager, Dan Hultman.
- F. USCG – Dave Pleasants – USCG now part of Department of Homeland Security. Split into two offices; Security and Environmental.
- G. UMWA – Greg Genz – Working to secure a permanent site on the Mn River.
- H. COE – Dan Krumholz – Currently working under CRA and may do so for majority of FY03. Temporary re-assignments: Dean Peterson to Chief, Contracting Division, Dan Krumholz to Chief, Locks & Dams, and Steve Tapp to Chief, Channels & Harbors.

3. Co-Chair Replacement

Gretchen will be the interim co-chair until Terry's position is filled.

4. Booster Barge Mullen Fuel Oil Spill

The following are comments from various people regarding the spill:
Stan Kolinowski, MPCA, Rochester

- Little oil recovered due to wind, waves, evaporation; very thin film
- Need to work on notifications, spill response plan & training

- Need to improve boom deployment and oil collection
- Oil spill may result in a MPCA enforcement action/penalty

Bob Drieslein, FWS

- No oil-slicked birds found
- Avoid barge refueling at backwater inlets

Greg Genz, UMWA

- The Thompson does not have enough oil spill boom aboard

River Alert Network: River_Alert@umesc.er.usgs.gov

Report unusual occurrences on the river to all on group distribution list.

Not a call to action, just a notification.

5. L/D 3 Safety & Embankments – Wilcox (COE)

Presentation.

COE is considering agency proposals.

Planning team performing well.

Getting close to a solution.

6. COE O&M Funding Review – Krumholz (COE)

Dan explained how the O&M funding process works and the limitations of the program.

The majority of the funding is for fixed operating costs. There is little flexibility or funding available for maintenance and repair items. Supplemental funding is not provided for new measures.

7. Whitewater Park – Raasch (COE), Mueller (MnDNR).

Whitewater Park Development Board formed in 1993-94. Park based on 1998 legislation. Construction is scheduled for completion in Dec 2005. COE is very concerned with status of Pool 1 Dredged Material Placement Site; Whitewater Park would destroy the site; no new site proposed. The Corps is preparing preliminary cost estimates for transferring material out of pool 1 to the USAF site and to the Southport site in pool 2.

8. Environmental Mgmt Program – Powell (COE) (65-1).

a. *Pool 8 Islands Phase III HREP DPR endorsed by consensus.*

Endorsement notes:

MnDNR concerned with vegetative response to drawdown; islands being built in good response area. Don explained that this is a trade-off with building islands, however these islands will be built outside of the good vegetative response area.

WDNR would like islands C8 & N8 to fit into the surrounding area (i.e. aesthetics of mounds by Coon Creek delta). Also, create some over-wintering habitat on the interior of the islands. Don said the planning committee is addressing these.

b. No new projects are needed until 2004; use pool plans and HNA's for project selection.

c. Miss. River Design Manual: Design and results of projects; COE poc is Jon Hendrickson.

9. Navigation Work Group – Pleasants (USCG).
 - a. COE Mid-River Mooring Buoy. COE fabricating with in-house resources at Fountain city. Will comply with USCG standards. Schedule is to deploy below LD 8, Genoa, WI spring/summer 2003. The navigation industry will need to encourage pilots to begin using.
 - b. Railroad embankments: BNSF is upgrading to pre 2001 flood conditions. However, they are not designing the embankment they are just side dumping with rail cars.
 - c. Lake Pepin ice. Work at LD 24 will slow down spring push (Mid-March at the earliest).

10. Embankments Maintenance Study – DeZellar (COE).
 - a. Change to the scoping document per Gretchen, now referred to as environmental restoration (vs. enhancement). We will not be putting monetary benefits of restoration on features at this time.
 - b. Terry Moe asked if “restoration” would trigger this to be a cost-share effort. Jeff DeZellar responded by saying the “repairs” will most likely be federally funded, however the above and beyond features could be cost-shared. He also said that the Nav Study would be addressing funding. Gretchen mentioned that General Arnold stated that “restoration” was COE funded and “enhancements” are cost-share.
 - c. Engineering Rehabilitation Efforts Review. Traditional engineering view will be used as foundation, however we’ll remain flexible.
 - d. Fish Passage: Nav. Study team is addressing fish passage (Dan Wilcox heads multi-agency team). Will be part of the environmental sustainability portion of the study. Will be looking at all alternatives for our embankments. We will use the Nav Study findings for this study.
 - e. Schedule: Draft PAR 30 Jun 03. Final PAR 30 Jul 03.
 - f. Team to do sites visit during the DPR process.

11. Restructured Nav. Study, Feasibility Study - DeZellar (COE).
 - a. Economic & Environmental sustainability on going.
 - b. Stakeholder Workshops. Held in Nov 02. Set goals & objectives of river ecosystem (pool plans) & determined river mgmt actions; linked together.
 - c. Goal is to have specific features & cost recommendations. Need to be careful with these; need to remain credible.
 - d. Expert panel formed to evaluate goals, objectives, costs, & outcomes (via economic mode). Again, need to be careful with these results. This is more art than science, lots of variables, want defensible results/#’s. Adaptive mgmt being used.
 - e. Key dates:
 - Sep 03 – completion of alts
 - Oct 03 – public meetings
 - April 04 – Draft Feasibility Report
 - May 04 – Final Feasibility Report
 - Aug 04 – Draft EIS
 - Nov 04 – Chief’s report

12. Channel Maintenance – Tapp, Palesh, Machajewski (COE) (65-2,3,4, & 5).
Reviewed handouts.
 - a. Dredging Summary – 100% beneficial use in 2002. Used new areas at CF Industries in pool 2 and Shore Acres in pool 8. MnDOT has removed approx. 250,000 CY from the Brownsville site and are expecting to remove another 200,000 CY next year.
 - b. Above West Newton Excavation – Planning to advertise in March. No extra topsoil will be taken to the site. Plan is to use existing topsoil. The site will be shaped to mimic the nearby Weaver Dunes area.
 - c. Fecal Coliform – Results of testing show that coliform is a problem on the river. However, transfer sites are no more or less of a problem compared to adjacent river. The Corps agreed to sample again in 2003.
 - d. Lansing Expansion – We have completed the expansion of the site from 3.2 acres to 5.0 as identified in the CMMP. Outstanding items include laying a permanent pipeline into the site from Big Slough and moving the drop structures to the SE corner of the site to make the site more usable for both hydraulic and mechanical placement of material. An EA is being prepared for both items.
 - e. McMillan Island – To date, the contractor has moved approximately 170,000cy of material to the Buck Creek placement site (43,000 from the channel and 127,000cy from McMillan Island). Plan is to move the remaining material to Buck Creek next spring (~54,000cy). Some 401 water quality and archeological issues still outstanding; COE PM-E actions.

13. Water Level Mgmt Task Force – Palesh (COE) (65-6&7).
 - a. Reviewed handouts.
 - b. *Pools 6 & 9 Small Scale Drawdown further study pursuit endorsed by consensus via email.* Note: To actually do the small scale drawdowns will require another RRF endorsement.

14. Recreation Work Group – Otto (COE).
 - a. Beach Plans – Pool 2 being printed, need EA review. Pool 8 draft to RWG in Jan 03. Pool 7 working. Need more public involvement. Lower Pool 4/Pool 5 kickoff summer 03.
 - b. Rec. Boating Study: Not sure it will be done in 03, hard to get 70mm film, may go digital. Get info into GIS, more user-friendly. May conduct study every 5 years vs. every 2.

15. Fish & Wildlife Work Group – Urich (COE) (65-8).
 - a. Reviewed minutes from last meeting. See minutes for details.
 - b. Will seek endorsement of Pool Plans for Pools 1 – 3 at April RRF. Thanks for Jeff Janvrin, Mike Davis, and Randy Urich for their efforts on these pool plans. Nice work.
 - c. Printing of Pool Plans: Needs further discussion; not a COE document; possibly fund via MRCC. Print a few hard copies and lots of CD's.

16. Weaver Bottoms Task Force – Drieslein (FWS).
An OSIT is needed to discuss the modifications to Mallard Island.

17. Safety Critical Waterway Signs – Mucha (COE) (65-9&10).
 - a. Presentation on installation of the Safety Critical Waterway Signs.
 - b. Using International Aids to Navigation standards; cuts cost & size dramatically vs. COE standards. Symbols only, no text on signs or buoys. Using more signs than required by USCG.
 - c. Agencies would like old signs to remain; legal concerns with leaving up; addressing liability issues.
 - d. Goal to install spring 2003.
 - e. Good cooperative effort with USCG.
 - f. Restricted area: 600' upstream, 150' downstream.

18. Shoreline Management Planning - All
Conflict with Federal and state regulations. Multi-agency meeting planned.

19. Next Meetings
April 29, La Crosse/Winona
August 26 & 27, Prairie du Chein
December 2 & 3, National Park Service Office, St, Paul

Daniel J Krumholz
Co-Chairman, RRF