

CEMVP-CO-CH

20 April 2004

MEMORANDUM FOR Record

SUBJECT: Minutes of River Resources Forum Meeting #68, 02 – 03 December 2003.

1. Introductions / Approve Minutes – A meeting of the River Resources Forum (RRF) was held on 02 – 03 December 2003 at the Radisson RiverFront Hotel, St. Paul, MN. Attached is the attendance list and handouts from the meeting.

The Minutes from RRF #67 were approved, as modified, by consensus.

2. Agency Activities – The agencies below had significant info to report.

WDNR – Gretchen reported that Terry Moe's position will possibly be filled by the Aug 04 RRF meeting.

FWS – Don Hultman reported that work on the CCP continues. Distributed handout regarding plans for Grand Excursion '04. Acquired 9400 acres (~3000 bottomland forest & tall grass prairie) to the refuge near Savanna, IL.

BNSF – Rick Rieck reported that he is the POC for real estate permit issues with BNSF.

MnDNR – Steve Johnson reported that organizational changes continue, however there has been no impact to the river. Tim Schlagenhaft will now be covering the Nav. Study issues for the MnDNR.

IDNR – Mike Griffin reported that he is still the RRF rep, however Diane Ford-Shivvers will take over once she gets more familiar with the program. Budget cuts have reduced 10 – 15 people. Continue work on/through the permit process.

COE – Dan Krumholz reported that the navigation season is done for the year. The last tow left St. Paul on 11/28.

WDOT – Ron Adams reported that they are working to fill Ellen Fishers position by spring '04.

UMWA – Greg Genz reported that we are still without a placement site on the Mn River.

NPS – JoAnn Kyril reported that they are still unsure of their '04 budget. Announced a new position to include Kate Hanson's. John Anfinson presented document on History of River within MNRRA.

MPCA – Judy reported that a proposal by the Commissioner and the Office of Environmental Assessment would combine to form the Department of Environmental Protection. The budget is in decent shape; no cuts or program shifts.

3. LD 3 Safety & Embankments – Wilcox (COE).

Dan Wilcox gave a presentation on the status of the project. Below is a brief outline.

- Objectives: improve nav. safety, reduce risk of embankment failure, and protect/restore river ecosystem.
- Alternatives: Guard wall, guide wall, embankments, fish passage.
- Progress: Interagency team reached consensus on embankments alternative, selected design for guide wall, and initiated designs.
- Next steps: Prepare draft report and EIS, public meetings, final ITR, Draft to MVD 4/04, initiate P&S 9/04, begin construction 10/05.
- Project cost: ~ \$40M

4. Whitewater Park – Johnson (MnDNR) & Tapp (COE).

Per Steve Tapp, the new COE Program Manager, Joe Mose stated that the COE has \$750,000 for CG in FY04. Matching \$ still needed from MnDNR. No alternative has been chosen yet. MnDNR decided to go forward with a redesign effort to develop a more environmentally friendly alternative that addresses long-term operations. COE and MDNR PM's will meet to develop schedule.

5. Asain Carp – Jay Rendall (MnDNR).

Jay gave an informative presentation on the Asian Carp issue. There are 4 species of carp that are a threat to the UMR (Grass, Bighead, Black, & Silver). Other invasive species noted are the Round goby and the New Zealand Mudsnail. Minnesota DNR is working to investigate means to prevent &/or control the invasive species with "Interruptible Pathways" located in strategic locations (not everywhere).

6. Channel Maintenance Program – Tapp & Machajewski (COE) (68-1).

A) Reviewed Dredging Schedule.

- Dredge THOMSON completed 12 jobs, ~ 417,000cy.
- Dredge Dubuque worked 2 jobs (did not complete Turning Basin), ~ 57,000cy.
- Gov't Mech. completed 1 job, ~ 5,600.
- Utilized both contract mechanical plants, completed 13 jobs, ~ 256,000cy.
- Relatively low dredging year; ~ 736,000cy.
- 100% beneficial use of dredged material. 18 sites used; 9 perm, 9 transfer.

B) Reviewed Channel Management & Placement Site Activities Schedule.

- Held P3/U4 CMS OSIT; permits in hand; ready to construct.
- Above West Newton (Is. 42) excavation underway; 480,000cy excavated.
- Minnesota River: No new site, working with Kraemer to continue use at historic site. Exploring implementation of the Cargill East River site, which is closer to river. If this becomes the only site above 35W, it is a concern because it is 2 miles upstream from most of the MN River dredging (Peterson's Bar). If the 11-acre site identified in the MN River DMMP is expanded, the Watershed District, or private interests would be required to assess floodplain impacts and acquire any permits or agreements for use.

- The FWS & WDNR expressed concern about erosion at Crats Island. The COE has prepared a stabilization plan for the site and hopes to construct this summer, pending EA and agency coordination.

C) Above West Newton presentation (Tapp).

D) Shallow Draft Excavation Equipment presentation (Machajewski).

7. Restructured Nav. Study, Feasibility Study – DeZellar (COE).

Public meetings held in Oct. well attended, 180+ people per meeting, well represented by all groups, all desire a well-balanced plan. Although the models are very sophisticated, the team feels they will not point to one preferred alternative. Contact Jeff DeZellar regarding dates of interest.

8. Embankments Maintenance Study – DeZellar (COE)

- PAR outlines issues, frames alternatives. Draft is written and being reviewed by COE. To be distributed to entire team by end of Dec 03, with team meeting in Jan 04. PAR to RRF at April meeting.

- DPR/Feasibility Report is next; prioritized site-specific alternatives; ID how funded. Looking at alternatives besides rip rap (i.e bioengineering), environmental restoration measures.

- Repairs of 5A & 8 to be done in 2005 from 2001 flood damage.

- Looking to tie ecosystem restoration features to Nav. Study; not sure on funding source; O&M won't be able to fund this.

9. Water Level Mgmt Task Force – Benjamin (WDNR).

A) Drawdowns (general).

- MVP Archeological staff and Office of Counsel to meet with ISHPO within the next 2 months.

- Address SHPO and Rec access issues (P6 & 9 Minor DD's).

- Getting positive response on using 1135 for rec. access & supplemental dredging.

- Draft DPR summer of 2004 for Pool 5 DD.

- To RRF at August meeting.

B) Pool 8 DD Long-term Impacts:

Dredging: Preliminary #'s show we (COE) have not recovered our initial costs, however we've benefited in reduced volumes. This however, still needs further evaluation.

Vegetative response: Some came back well but stresses of wind & waves are evident; muskrats concentrated in this lush area. Aerial photography due in Jan/Feb 2004.

10. Recreation Work Group – Berg (COE).

A) Pool 3, Diamond Bluff, Seawing Park: Jim Tousignant, student at UW-Riverfalls (on behalf of Fred Ottem, City of Diamond Bluff), gave a presentation on the city's proposed beach & park development plan. Now that the Seawing Park property is in public ownership (Diamond Bluff) the RWG can take the necessary steps to amend the Pool 3 Upper 4 Beach Plan to include Seawing Park as a beach site, thus making it eligible to receive dredged material. However, there is no federal interest in stabilizing the shoreline so the city will need to seek other assistance in this matter. There is also no federal interest to realign the navigation channel in this reach.

B) Rec. Boating Study: Continuing to evaluate and look into digital technology; working with St. Mary's University in Winona. Possibility includes GIS database.

C) Rec. Beach Plans:

1. Per Mike Giffin, IDNR, MRCC has requested that we revisit the beaches in pool 9.
2. In November, WiDNR contracted with Brennan Marine to reshape 7 – 8 beach sites in lower pool 4. Cost was ~ \$9,600.

3. The Rec. Work Group was asked to prepare a spreadsheet on the status of the existing beach plans and prioritize for updating and completing.

11. Fish & Wildlife Work Group – Yager (FWS) (68-2, 3 & 4).

A) Pool Plans: Final review and comments are due by 12/24. Printing to be completed in mid-January. Will be creating a “straw dog” & implementation plan for pools 3 & 9; discuss funding, construction sequence, prioritization.

B) Backwater Dredging Equipment: Developing a list of opportunities/demand for this type of equipment; work to be performed by gov’t or via contract.

C) The Pool Plans are being used during the development of the Nav Study.

D) Turtles of the UMR: Will elevate the need for more info on turtles. Jamie Edwards and Mike Pappas results & conclusions from Is. 42 to be presented to RRF at April meeting. Per Dan Krumholz, the COE would like to see what the excavation project impacts are at the site & see if there is ways we can change plans to enhance the habitat.

E) LD9 Access Road: Mitigation needed for reconfigured access road. Need to explore mitigation banking options. To be discussed at April RRF.

12. Environmental Management Program – Powell (COE) (68-5, 6, 7, 8, 9, & 10)

A) Misc: Working on 6 project completion reports. Will be working more on outreach for public involvement (i.e. display & brochure). Report to Congress; revisions out in Jan ’04 including maps.

B) Spring Lake: Potential conflict between Pool 5 Drawdown in 2005 and project construction; schedule to begin construction in 2004 and complete in 2005. Hope to have project completed prior to Pool 5 Drawdown.

Spring Lake HREP Project endorsed by consensus

C) EMP Funding of Drawdowns: Request to be sent to MVD requesting use of EMP funds for supplemental & recreational access dredging. Gretchen Benjamin (WiDNR) concerned with dredging the main navigation channel due to limited EMP budget.

13. Next Meetings

April 20 – Winona, MN at Winona State University

August 31 & September 1 – Wabasha, MN

December 7 & 8 – Bloomington, MN

Daniel J Krumholz
Co-Chairman, RRF