

CEMVP-CO-CH

07 December 2004

MEMORANDUM FOR Record

SUBJECT: Minutes of River Resources Forum Meeting #70, August 31 & September 1, 2004.

1. Introductions / Approve Minutes – A meeting of the River Resources Forum (RRF) was held on August 31 and September 1, 2004 at the AmericInn of Wabasha, MN. Attached is the attendance list and handouts from the meeting.

The Minutes from RRF #69 were approved, as modified, by consensus.

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

FWS – Don Hultman reported that the Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) process is on-going. Distribution of a draft report is expected to the public this winter, with public meetings to be held in early 2005. The Pool Plans are being used as the habitat vision within the CCP. Bob Drieslein will be retiring Jan 1, 2005. Gary Wege reported that a draft Nav Study Biological Opinion would be sent to the COE in early September. Mussels: Gary also reported that the Higgins' Eye mussel is having some survival success in Lake Pepin. The next effort is with the Maple leaf mussel; the only population exists in the St. Croix River. The plan is to go with the cage culture effort like what was done with the Higgins' Eye. For some reason the zebra mussel populations are cycling, not sure why. Finally, the Freshwater Mussels of the UMR book has been updated.

UMWA – Greg Genz reported that the MnR Watershed District is preparing to make an offer to Cargill for the Cargill East site. Work is also underway with the MnDOT for the 494 site.

MDOT – Dick Lambert reported that their budget situation is very unstable at this time. Also, the Winona harbor and Pelzer St. expansion projects are tentatively on hold until some dredging issues can be resolved.

MPCA – Judy Mader reported that with the current re-org. 1/3 to 3/8 of her time would be spent on the COE dredging program.

IDNR – Mike Griffin reported that the IDNR is also having budget issues.

COE – (handout 70-1) Dan Krumholz reported that the new leaders within the COE with respect to MVP are as follows: MVP, District Engineer, Col Pfenning; Chief MVD, Brig. Gen. Crear; Chief of Engineers, Lt. Gen. Strock, and Chief of Civil Works, Major Gen. Riley.

3. Lower Vermillion River - David Morrison, MPCA (handout 70-2).

Mr. Morrison gave a presentation on the chronic turbidity problems that are affecting the Lower Vermillion River and how the corrective action recommendations will get to a development of a total maximum daily load.

4. Flow Frequency, UMR Comprehensive Plan, & Floodway Computation studies – Stuart Dobberpuhl, COE (handouts 70-3, 4, & 5).

Mr. Dobberpuhl gave a brief explanation of each of the studies and their relationship to the St. Paul District.

5. Channel Maintenance Program – Krumholz, Tapp & Machajewski (COE) (handouts 70 – 6, 7, & 8).

A. Dredging Schedule: Due to the high water experienced this spring and in to early summer we had a late start of the dredging season. As of 30 Aug, 13 jobs had been completed for ~ 422,300 cy of material. Of note was the job in pool 9 at Is. 126 with the development of the Genoa Power Plant placement site. Through Aug 14, we had a total of 5 towboat groundings in MVP at the following locations:

- P3 Morgan's Coulee, dredged by Mechanical CT
- P5A Betsy Slough, dredged by WAT
- P10 McMillan Is., dredged by WAT
- P9 Is. 126, dredged by Mechanical CT
- P7 Somer Chute, out of channel, no dredging required

B. Channel Mgmt and Placement Site activities: The following notable projects were recently completed:

- Wing dam notchings in pool 3
- Peterson Lake bank stabilization project completion in lower pool 4
- Wing dam notchings and accreted Is. fortification in upper pool 5
- Mallard Is. and MN-14 modification in pool 5
- Brownsville Placement site reshaping in pool 8

C. CMMP update: Currently working on creating a PDF –based CD ROM of the CMMP. Also hope to have the CMMP available via the RRF Web site.

D. Fecal Coliform: Testing occurred at 10 sites throughout MVP during Aug. 2004. One more test is scheduled this year. The results will be used to update the 2002 report. At this time we have no concerns about the fecal coliform levels within the bathtubs.

6. Navigation Work Group (NWG) – Krumholz (COE).

A. Due to the USCG's new role in Homeland Security, the USCG participation level in the NWG as well as the RRF has been limited. In order to keep the NWG active, the chair duties have been turned over to Dick Lambert, MnDOT. Issues for the NWG are:

- a. Mooring Buoy: buoy below LD 8 is not being utilized by tows; back to nudging into the bank. Management vs. location issue.
- b. Fleeting areas: need to identify areas.
- c. Critical Areas: review list/locations.

B. CP Rail concerns above LD 7.

- Mr. Tony Luft, HDR, represented CP Rail at the meeting.
- Expressed concern regarding 600' stretch of track above LD 7 that had 6" of settlement occur (tracks hanging) after a Jun 04 rain event. Similar problems happened in 1996 & 1998.
- Area above LD 7 now a 10 mph zone.
- CP Rail made repairs so the area is not a pending failure, however a concern.

- Looking to COE/Nav industry for assistance; citing possible prop wash as a contributing factor.
- Area located within Critical Location Zone for track-bed erosion.
- COE can't fund repairs to private property
- A major contributing factor is most likely due to drainage off of I90/Hwy 61. Dick Lambert suggested that CP write a letter to MnDOT regarding the drainage from I90/Hwy 61.

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

- Chuck Spitzack is now the new Regional PM for the Study; Denny Lundberg is the new Chief of Engineering in MVR.
- April 29 DRAFT Feasibility study was released to the public for a 30-day review.
- Significant Study dates:
 - 15 Sep, EIS to printer
 - 25 Sep, MVR report to MVD
 - 01 Oct, MVD notice of report
 - 12 Oct, 30-day agency review
 - 22 Nov, MRC hearing report signed
 - 24 Nov, MRC report to HQ
 - 30 Nov, Chiefs report signed.
- “D-Prime” has been accepted by all parties for Eco System restoration
- National Research Council (NRC) is pushing the non-structural features. Also, they are still very critical of the economic model.
- There are 3 bills in Congress in WRDA '04 regarding the Nav Study. They are recommending a 15-year 1st phase approach.
- UMR Trust Fund; Fed fund \$2.5 billion. \$100 million in 2005 and each year thereafter until \$2.5 billion reached for Ecosystem Restoration. On the Navigation side, there is a proposed 50% cost-share with the IW Trust Fund.

a. 8. Embankments – DeZellar (COE)

A. The RRF endorsed the PAR at the April meeting.

- \$100,000.00 in 2005 to complete study
- Aug 19 meeting: Cost/benefit and ranking of features from PAR. Have a pick list available as opportunities arise.

B. LD 8 Erosion Protection

- implement PAR features
- \$650,000.00 to work with
- will not be the 50-year fix per COE standards
- go with native seeding of 5-acre area
- remove/replace riprap and stockpile removed for future re-use
- planning for an end of year contract award
- investigating the use of biosolids as fertilizer

9. Water Level Mgmt Task Force (WLMTF) – Schlagenhaft (MnDNR) (handouts 70-9, 10, 11).
- A. Pool 5 Drawdown (DD).
- At the last WLMTF meeting the each partner agency was able to come up with and pool enough funds to cover the rec. dredging costs to cover a 2.5' DD.
 - Public meetings are set for Sep 22 & 23 in Wabasha and Fountain City.
 - The WLMTF recommends at least a 2.0' DD, but prefers a 2.5' DD.
 - According to Dan Krumholz, equipment should be available to support a DD of Pool 5 at a cost of \$600,000.00 to \$1.3 million however this does not include placement site impact costs.
 - An EA is being prepared by the COE looking at the biologically optimum level for a DD. Mussel and cultural resource surveys are being conducted as part of the EA.
- B. Long-term Hydraulic Plan
- Tim suggested that we begin looking into long-term planning for DDs. Items to address include funding issues, an implementation cycle, placement site issues...etc.
- C. EMP Funding for Environmental Dredging
- A source of funding that has been mentioned for environmental dredging for DDs is EMP.
 - In order for this to happen, initial support will be needed from both the FWWG and the RRF then be moved up the EMP chain. From there drawdown dredging would then need to be put into the mix with the rest of the EMP projects.
- D. Additional DD funds are being pursued from the following:
- FWS, congressional add-ons per the states and MRCC, state budgets, and the Nature Conservancy.
10. Recreation Work Group – Otto (COE) (handout 70-12)
- A. Beach Planning. Discussed handout regarding plan for updating and completing beach plans. FWS will provide interim guidance for beach maintenance work in pools 7 & 8 and lower pool 4.
- B. St. Mary's University will distribute Rec Boating Study info to RWG members.
- C. Pool 2 Beach plan has been distributed.
11. Fish & Wildlife Work Group – Yager (FWS) (handout 70-13)
- A. Pool 9 workshop
- Facilitated by Mike Griffin
 - Going to develop fact sheet of consensus area
 - Develop plans for pools 8 & 10 too

- Systemic implementation plan (will require future RRF endorsement)

B. Asian Carp

- Latest theory is using screaming sound bubbles to repel fish.
- Very questionable effectiveness
- Silver Carp have been spotted in pool 18 in 2004.
- RRF requested a FWVG position on the Asian Carp issue by the April 2005 RRF.

12. Environmental Management Program – Powell (COE) (handout 70-14, 15, 16)

A. Budget:

- FY04
 - o \$19 million program; \$2.9 million in MVP
 - o 75% obligated at end of July, rest will be by end of FY.
- FY05
 - o \$28 M, \$4.5 MVP (Presidents Budget)
 - o \$19 M (House).
 - o Planning on House version

B. 2004 Construction Projects in Review

- Ambrough Slough Sta. III: completed.
- Pool Slough: Advertise Aug 2004, bid open 08 Sep, need co-op agreement signed, construction to be complete by Dec 05 for \$200,000.
- Spring Lake: Bid opening 05 Aug, 3 bidders, low bidder LW Mattson, 15 Aug award, \$3.75M (\$3.2M EMP, \$470,000 O&M Is E3), initiate construction this fall, LW Mattson is aware of potential drawdown, will re-use LD 5 embankment rock.

C. FY05 Potential Jobs

- Long Meadow Lake
- Pool 8 Ph. III, Sta. I
- Pool 8Ph. III, Sta II P&S
- Harpers & Capoli Sloughs and Conway Lake
- Lake Winneshiek
- 6 completion reports
- Final Report to Congress

13. Next Meetings

December 7 & 8 – Bloomington, Minnesota River FWS Refuge

Daniel J Krumholz
Co-Chairman, RRF