

CEMVP-CO-CH

6 December 2005

MEMORANDUM FOR Record

SUBJECT: Minutes of River Resources Forum Meeting #73, 23 & 24 August 2005.

1. Introductions / Approve Minutes – A meeting of the River Resources Forum (RRF) was held on 23 & 24 August 2005 at the Winona, MN City Counsel Chambers. Attached is the attendance list and handouts from the meeting.
Following introductions, the Minutes from RRF #72 were approved as prepared.
2. Agency Activities – Note: Only the agencies listed below had significant information to report.
 - A. MnDOT – Dick Lambert. The Port Development Assistance Program has received more funding for the rehabilitation of more ports. Winona port development project moving forward; material to be used for Pelzer Street railroad overpass project.
 - B. UMWA – Greg Genz. Lower Minnesota River Watershed District (LMRWD) has an agreement with Cargill for the East River site, however the site will not be able to be used this year. Steve Hardy has left the St. Paul Port Authority; UMWA concerned with loss of background knowledge. UMWA wants to be a better advocate for the river.
 - C. FWS – Dan Stinnett. CCP Alt E will be released for public review in mid-to-late October with a 45-day comment period.
 - D. MRCC – Robin Grawe. Two public meetings were held this summer regarding recreation issues; looking to measure the economic impacts of recreation.
 - E. WiDNR – Gretchen Benjamin. Jim Fischer is the new river planner (filled Gretchen's previous position).
 - F. COE – Dan Krumholz. The new deputy commander for MVP is John Kunkle, he comes with Project Management experience. Lisa Lund joins the Channels & Harbors team from the Winona construction office. The dredge GOETZ christening & open house on June 24th & 25th was a great event. Dean Peterson is on a Leave of Absence; he is an Associate Professor at Montana State University.
3. Next Meetings
December 6 & 7, Bloomington FWS MNR Refuge Office.
4. Water Level Management – Schlagenhaft (MnDNR) & DeZellar (COE) (handout 73 – 1, 2, & 3).
 - A. Pool 5 Drawdown: The drawdown in pool 5 taxed MVPs equipment capabilities, however all dredging was accomplished. About 1000 acres have been exposed; about ½ of what was expected in Weaver Bottoms but more acres were exposed in other areas. Although there was not much precipitation and the river flows were down, we were still able to maintain a drawdown in either primary or secondary control. Recreational access dredging was performed to maintain access to the Great River Harbor

and the Buffalo City landing. The MnDNR constructed a temporary boat landing at the West Newton Chute site.

B. Future Drawdowns: The following pools are being considered for future drawdowns depending on channel conditions and funding levels: Pool 5 (follow-up to FY05, considering going to 2.0'), Pool 6 (minor < 1'), Pool 9 (via NESP funding) and possibly Pool 3.

5. Channel Maint. Program –Tapp, & Machajewski (handout 73 – 4).
 - A. 36 dredging jobs have been scheduled for an estimated quantity of just under 700,000cy so far this season. A lot of effort has been put into Pool 5 for the drawdown (5 separate dredges).
 - B. Mechanical Contractor, Andrie, began work on 17 May in Pool 5A.
 - C. Reads Landing Transfer Site Excavation: Solicitation being sent to Bay Shore this week. Expect notice to proceed in Oct.
 - D. Lower Pool 4 DMMP/CMP: Study to resume this summer; concern with capacity at Teepeeota Point Transfer Site.
 - E. Minnesota River: The sale of the Cargill East River site to the Watershed District is almost complete; need to identify the unloading site. The site at the I494 Bridge is still being considered.
 - F. Pool 2 CMS: The O&M work on the Is. 112 Closure Structure began on 8 June. The side channel excavation and wing dam notching will be constructed in FY06 (via NESP).
 - G. Pool 5 CMS: Construction of Is. E3 of the Small Island Complex began on 9 Aug. in conjunction with the Spring Lake HREP project; Is. E1 is also expected to be constructed this FY.

6. Environmental Management Program – Powell (COE) (handout 73-5, 6)
 - A. Funding. Short on funds for Spring Lake HREP; plan to pay contractor in FY06. P&S for Pool 8 Is. Phase III Stage 1 & 2; will award and hope to construct in FY06. \$20.0M proposed budget for FY06.
 - B. Use of EMP funds for Drawdown Dredging. Agency comments:
 - IDNR – Griffin. Concerned with current limited budget and strain on current program and uncertainty of how long drawdown dredging will last (i.e. future benefits).
 - WiDNR – Benjamin. Summarized handout 73-6. Does not support the use of EMP funds for drawdowns at this time.
 - MnDNR – Schlaghaft. Drawdowns are a great management tool. River managers should use all habitat money available; EMP is only source of habitat money available. May lose opportunity for Pool 5 follow-up drawdown in FY06 if EMP is not an option.
 - FWS – Stinnett. Originally opposed to the use of EMP funds for drawdowns, however starting to change position. Waiting to see how NESP shakes out. Will make final decision in ~18 months.
 - COE – Powell, Krumholz, Otto. EMP is another option, however NESP is preferred source. Will need a DPR for EMP funding; have lots of info but not all together; lots of work to pursue via EMP. NESP is supplemental dredging not O&M

advanced. EMP funding will not be available in FY06 for dredging, but could be used for PED work. FY06 may require more dredging in Pool 5, however O&M probably will not be justified. May be able to get FY06 EMP funds for Pool 5 only, but will delay other EMP projects. Look into beginning the DPR with O&M funds (\$75k) then turn over to EMP/NESP for finalization and construction. There may be an issue with using EMP & NESP on the same project.

It was recommended that the RRF revisit the use of EMP & NESP funds for drawdown dredging in about 18 months (spring 2007).

7. Fish & Wildlife Work Group – Yager (FWS) (handouts 73 – 7)

Handout review. Kudos to Dennis Anderson for work on WLM Programmatic Fact Sheet.

A. Programmatic Planning.

- *Water Level Management: Endorsed by consensus*
- *Floodplain Acquisition: Endorsed by consensus*
 - discussion regarding main poc/team lead, authorities, policies
- *Habitat and Resource Protection: Endorsed by consensus*

B. NESP & FWVG.

- FWVG is unclear of where they fit into NESP, feel they need more communication with NESP.
- recommend FWVG stay the course, things should clear up in the near future
- FWS concerned with NESP production vs history of accomplishments with MVP.

C. HREP Projects seeking Endorsement

- *The list of EMP projects presented by the FWVG was endorsed by consensus.*

8. Navigation & Environmental Sustainability Program (NESP) – DeZellar (COE)

A) General

- Program funding came at the end of Jan. 2005 as a Congressional Add-on.
- Stakeholders involved but want & need more partner coordination
- 15-year implementation plan
- Much Pool 5 monitoring being performed

B) Pool 9 Drawdown

- NESP prioritization project
- Issues with Alliant Power Plant and Higgins Eye mussel
- 1.5' & 2.0' alternatives being evaluated (hydraulic possibilities and EA)
- Public meetings to be held this fall
- Concern exists that Pool 9 is in good shape and a drawdown may mess things up.

C) Embankment Maintenance

- LD 8 flow distribution being evaluated. Experimental seeding plan being implemented via Kurt Brownell. Concern with Reno bottoms already in good shape; don't want to mess it up. Good candidate for PED work.

- LD 5A draft recon being worked up by Corby Lewis. Expecting much spin-off NESP work.

- D) Forestry Management
 - Randy Urich doing a great job.
 - Draft Forestry Management Plan by end of year.
- E) Public Involvement
 - Kevin Bluhm, MVP leading effort.
 - Website needs some work.
- F) Floodplain restoration
 - John Petersen, MVP leading effort.
 - Early Sept. partner meeting to discuss efforts
- G) Shoreline Erosion
 - Project manager Tom Kirkeeng, MVR
 - Need to ID 2 locations per district as test sites.
 - Much work needed
 - RRF partners concerned with lack of upfront coordination.
- H) Science Panel
 - Barry Johnson, USGS lead.
 - Working on report; Adaptive Management of UMR, goals and objectives and institutional arrangements.
 - 6 subgroups
 - Interaction with all NESP groups
 - Review NESP projects in 2006.
 - Barry is looking for comments from RRF on what RRF wants from Science Panel.
- I) Mooring Buoys
 - Due to feasibility report from Nav Study, program does not include MVP.
 - Will look to get MVP added.

9. Institutional Arrangements – DeZellar (COE).

- Rebecca Soileau, is lead.
- 2 workshops held, discussed assumptions and constraints.

10. Recreation Work Group – Berg (COE)

- A) Pool 5 Rec Monitoring with NESP funds
 - 10 flights, main channel & beaches
 - LP4, 5, 5A
 - Boat landing counts; trucks & trailer (FWS & MnDNR effort).
- B) Beach Management Forums
 - Prairie du Chien & Lansing
 - Demand from MRCC & public over lack of beach mgmt.
 - Sept OSIT being scheduled

11. Navigation Work Group – Lambert (MnDOT)

- A) NWG has not been able to meet; looking to meet this fall. Issues include: Pepin Ice Advisory/restrictions, Grounding notifications with Nav Ind. and Railroad.

B) Marker Buoys being deployed in MVR & MVS for future mooring buoy and cell locations

C) NESP barge fleet meeting scheduled for Sept. 8.

12. Other Business - All

A) Pool 6 Drawdown

- Recreational Access dredging will most likely be needed at Pla Mor and Straight Slough. Need to discuss private access dredging issues (i.e. can/should we perform private dredging for the good of the WLM program?).

- Dick Otto will work with Russ Snyder regarding the FWS Drawdown funds for FY06.

B) NESP Authorization Language

- Being discussed at HQ COE level.

- Cost share of 35/65 vs 50/50.

C) Channel Management Plans

- If this work is traditionally done with O&M Funds, why spend NESP funds?

- Discuss at next RRF.

Daniel J Krumholz
Co-Chairman, RRF