

CEMVP-CO-CH

23 August 2005

MEMORANDUM FOR Record

SUBJECT: Minutes of River Resources Forum Meeting #72, 26 April 2005.

1. Introductions / Approve Minutes – A meeting of the River Resources Forum (RRF) was held on 26 April 2005 at the Winona State University. Attached is the attendance list and handouts from the meeting.

Following introductions, the Minutes from RRF #71 were approved as prepared.

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

- A. FWS – Don Hultman (handouts 72 –1&2). Draft CCP is out for public review; copies being sent to agency partners; maps of alternatives & Executive Summary is also available; 16 public meetings to be held by the end of June 2005. Trempealeau & Winona District Manager positions to be filled in May 2005. Refuge Complex Manager (Don Hultman) jurisdiction is expanding to include Mark Twain & Illinois River refuges; all UMR refuges under one manager.
- B. MnDOT – Dick Lambert. Winona port development project moving forward; dredging to expand port operations; material to be used for Pelzer Street railroad overpass project; additional funds from State Legislature if project approved by MnPCA. Dredging to be complete by end of 2005.
- C. WDOT – Larry Keick. Wisconsin's Harbor Assistance program is getting attention; possible additional funding.
- D. MnDNR – Rebecca Wooden. Two of the three State Planner positions are being reviewed for possible elimination; more non-river related duties to be assigned to Tim Schlagenhaft; more time spent away from river issues; The RRF will draft a letter to the Secretary of the MnDNR expressing the need of continued management of the Upper Mississippi River by the MnDNR. The MnDNR requested that an agenda item on the Effects of Recreational Boating on Water Quality and Shoreline Erosion be added to the August RRF.
- E. MPCA – Judy Mader & Norman Senjem (handouts 72-3). Proposal (by others) before the legislature to re-establish the full 401 Certification Program at the MPCA; possibly adding an application fee. Proposal made to the legislature by MPCA and OEA to merge and change name to Department of Environmental Protection. A study is underway regarding Lake Pepin's Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDLs); a work plan is posted on the MPCAs website.
- F. UMW – Greg Genz. Cargill and the Lower Minnesota River Watershed District (LMRWD) are negotiating the land purchase of the Cargill East River future dredged material placement site.
- G. WiDNR – Gretchen Benjamin. Gretchen will be organizing a congressional visit to Washington DC to lobby additional support for the Navigation & Environmental Sustainability Program; concerned with lack of understanding

of program in DC. Requests that an Agency Permit Review agenda item be added to the Dec 2005 RRF, due to employee turnover within the various agencies.

- H. COE – Dan Krumholz & Dean Peterson. Reorganization: Construction is now part of Engineering Division and Operations is its own Division; New Chief of Operations is Bruce Bolden; Assistant Chief, Ben Wopat is on special assignment, will be replaced permanently in near future. Tom Oksness, Chief, Physical Support Branch (Dredges & Hired Labor Crew) is retiring April 29; new Chief is Greg Frankowsky. The new dredge GOETZ is scheduled to arrive in Fountain City in Mid-May; the dredge WAT will perform the initial Pool 5 Drawdown dredging until the GOETZ is fully operational; once the GOETZ is operational the WAT will server as propulsion and living quarters. The dredge GOETZ christening & open house is set for June 24th & 25th at the Winona Levee; Kevin Berg of the LaCrescent office will coordinate agency participation. We've experienced the 12th incident at LD 3 since 1967 in which barges have gone into or through the dam gates; this time it was an up bound tow loaded with cement and limestone; some damage sustained to the concrete but no damage to the gates. Funding for the guide wall extension at LD 3 is not in the FY06 budget, however it could be with a Congressional add-on; the Inland Waterway User Board will be meeting in July.
3. Next Meetings
August 23 & 24, Buffalo City/Wabasha area to observe the Pool 5 Drawdown.
December 6 & 7, Bloomington FWS MNR Refuge Office.
4. Institutional Arrangements – Soileau (COE) (handouts 72 - 4&5).
Comments regarding the Concept for Institutional Arrangements (IA) document distributed via email by Paul Machajewski on April 8 are due to Rebecca Soileau by June 1st. The RRF supports the direction of the IA, however will endorse at a later date.
5. Channel Maint. Program – Krumholz, Tapp, & Machajewski (handout 72 – 6).
A. Dredging Season outlook. Currently conducting early-season surveys; USCG WYACONDA reported areas of concern in Pools 2 (Freeborn Is.) and 8 (Root River). After a meeting with RIAC this spring dredge cut layouts will be more aligned with where tows need for maneuverability and still within the recommended bend with as recommended by the GREAT Study.
B. New Mechanical Contractor, Andrie, expected to begin work on 9 May; will be using 2 crane barges with modified buckets; pre-construction meeting to be held in Winona on May 3rd.
C. 1st Tow through Lake Pepin: MnDNR concerned with effort needed to break through the ice this spring and its effect on water quality & fish; tows determine when they will attempt to go through the lake; the COE nor the USCG regulate this; suggested that the MnDNR talk with local towing companies who may be taking unnecessary risks by attempting to break through too much ice.

- D. Reads Landing Transfer Site Excavation: 1.3M cy to be pumped to the Wabasha Gravel Pit beginning July 2005 via 14" hydraulic dredge owned by Bay Shore Marine from Michigan; OSIT to be held in May; 20' slope from Hwy 61 to railroad tracks to be filled; approximately 2 excavations left before gravel pit is full.
 - E. Lower Pool 4 DMMP/CMP: Study to resume this summer; concern with capacity at Teepeeota Point Transfer Site.
 - F. Minnesota River: The sale of the Cargill East River site to the Watershed District is in negotiations; need to identify the unloading site. The site at the I494 Bridge is still being considered.
 - G. Pool 2 CMS: An OSIT for the plans selected features is scheduled for May 12; the Is. 112 Closure Structure and berm will be constructed (O&M) this FY, the side channel excavation and wing dam notching will be constructed in FY06 (via NESP).
 - H. Pool 5 CMS: Is. E3 of the Small Island Complex will be constructed this FY in conjunction with the Spring Lake HREP project; Is. E1 may also be constructed.
 - I. Placement site stabilization is designed and planned for three sites in Lower Pool 4 (Reads, Crats, & Teepeeota). Construction will begin on Crats Is. in FY06.
 - J. Mooring Buoy: After discussions with RIAC this spring a lead line will be added to the stern of the mooring buoy below LD 8 to make it easier to use.
6. Water Level Management – Schlagenhaft (MnDNR) & DeZellar (COE) (handout 72 – 7).

The Pool 5 Letter Report/EA was endorsed by Consensus.

A. Pool 5 Drawdown: The go, no-go meeting will be held on 5/3 at Winona State University. The plan, if the go is given, will be to begin the drawdown on 6/13 with a reduction in water levels not to exceed 0.2' per day. The drawdown will be 1.5' at LD 5 until mid September with the pool being returned to normal operations by 10/1.

Update: Depending on river flows, the drawdown is a go for summer 2005. Lots of monitoring is planning including but not limited to vegetation, water quality, sedimentation, recreation, cultural resources, and mussels. Funding for this monitoring will be from NESP, O&M, & LTRM. Public meetings were held on 4/21 & 27 in Fountain City and Wabasha respectively; there was support expressed by the public for the drawdown however, concerns were raised over rec. access in Buffalo City (Peck campground). **Update: Tim Schlagenhaft and Scot Johnson met with Mr. Peck on the river in early May and Mr. Peck agreed that there will be sufficient water at his docks during the drawdown.** The distribution of public information regarding the drawdown will be via newsletters, press releases, website, toll-free info line...etc.

B. Programmatic Fact Sheet: This long-term water level management plan will require future RRF endorsement.

C. Future Drawdowns: Pool 5 in 2006; depending on channel conditions next year. Pool 6 Minor (< 1.0'); depending on channel conditions this summer, may dredge this summer for 2006 drawdown. Pool 9 in 2007; concerns over mussels and barge fleeing at the Alliant Power Plant in Lansing. NWG personnel will be meeting on site with Alliant in May 2005.

7. Environmental Management Program – Powell (COE) (handout 72-8)

A. EMP Funds for Drawdowns: Both the Fish & Wildlife Service and the Wisconsin DNR expressed concern with the use of EMP funds drawdowns; concerned with the limited funding currently available for EMP and how adding drawdowns would impact already prioritized EMP. This is an EMPC policy question and should also be discussed by the FWWG. Agency positions on this issue are requested for the Aug RRF.

B. Funding: FY05 budget: Spring Lake is ~\$1M short; however contractor plans to finish work. Will be paid with FY06 funds. FY06 budget: MVP looking good, ~\$17.5M. MVP has project lists ready for the next 2 –3 years (MVR & MVS not so ready).

C. NESP & EMP: The two programs may eventually merge into one program; an argument can be made to keep them separate; may need some lobbying.

8. Fish & Wildlife Work Group – Yager (FWS) (handouts 72 – 9, 10, 11)

Asian Carp: Position statement reviewed and accepted as written. The RRF would like the FWWG to investigate the effects the Asian Carp are having on commercial fishing. **Update: per the Alton LTRMP field station... "We know Asian Carp populations have increased dramatically. They likely compete with other planktivorous (plankton eaters) fish such as buffalo, paddlefish, and gizzard shad. We don't yet know if they are displacing native fishes, or impacting their populations. Research is ongoing to get at some of these questions."**

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

- Program funding came at the end of Jan. 2005 as a Congressional Add-on.
- 32 projects identified; PMs working on Project Management Plans.
- MVP projects include
 - o Pool 5 DD monitoring; nitrogen, mussels, rec use...etc.
 - o Pool 9 DD; build on past efforts, 1.5 to 2.0' DD with some restrictions at Lansing. Issues: Higgins eye, Alliant Power fleeing, cutl. resources
 - o Lock & Dam 8 Embankment Lowering
 - o Pool 2 Channel Management Study features: Wing Dams & Side Channel Restoration.
 - o Forestry Management: MVD/UMR; all lands covered (public & private).
 - o Ecosystem Restoration (MVD): MVP Pool 5 Sequence Implementation Plan.
 - o Mooring Buoys Pools 11 – 25; MVP has prototype below LD 8.
 - o Institutional Arrangements.
 - o Barge Fleeing (MVR lead).

- Communication Strategy.
 - WRDA 2005 Draft, Senate version
 - 1200' locks
 - Ecosystem Restoration
 - Evaluation reports not included.
10. Embankments – DeZellar (COE)
Study continues, working on recon level design for all sites.
11. Recreation Work Group – Benjamin (WiDNR)
A) NESP funding available for Pool 5 Drawdown Recreation monitoring:
- Aerial photos of lower pool 4 and pools 5 & 5A
- Boat landing counts
B) Aerial Boating Study. Working with St. Mary's University (Winona) on a usable format.
C) Impacts of Recreational Boating: MnDNR would like to do a presentation on the effects of rec. boating on water quality and shoreline erosion at a future RRF.
12. Navigation Work Group – Lambert (MnDOT)
A) MVP mooring buoy is being modified per meeting with RIAC this winter; adding a lead line.
B) Bend width meeting held with RIAC this past winter; discussed channel conditions from Holmen Field (St. Paul) down to LD 10; much insight gained on both sides.
C) Barge Fleeting Study being funded by NESP. Lead by MVR.
D) Interest still exists in the Biologist-on-board program.
13. Strategic Planning
Need to re-committee to UMR efforts.

Daniel J Krumholz
Co-Chairman, RRF