

**(ROPE) Meeting Minutes**  
**10 July 2002**  
1300hr  
**Gull Lake Recreation Area**

**Reservoir Operations Plan Evaluation (ROPE) Studies**

(ROPE) meeting attendees: 10

1. Gregg Struss: (C.O.E)
2. John O'Leary: (C.O.E)
3. Mark Mortensen: DNR Forestry
4. Marty Anderson: DNR Wildlife
5. David Bohlander: DNR Fisheries
6. Ron Morreim: DNR Waters
7. Nathan Tuomi: Private Property Owner- Gull River Association
8. Nadine Wittkopp: Private Property Owner- Gull Lake
9. Jane Gunsbury: Resort Owner- Gull Lake
10. Bo Cote: Resort Owner- Gull Lake

- An agenda including a brief summary of the study was passed out to all the attendees (see attached enclosure 1 for agenda and handouts). Data within the summary is approximately 6 months old.
- Introductions of the meeting attendees.
- Why the decision or need to start this 4-year study? O'Leary/Struss commented:
  1. The plan is in great need for an update; the current plan is approximately 40 years old.
    - a. Why the need for the update?
      1. There have been many changes throughout the basin in the last 40 years, both ecologically and economically.
      2. The ability to monitor, regulate, study, sample and maintain the dams and water flows have increased greatly throughout the years, there have been some big advancements.
      3. There are missing (pieces) or players in the puzzle of the current plan (tribes, resort owners, homeowners). The "Players" in ROPE have become much more diverse in recent years, and are becoming all the more important when it comes to needed inputs and ideas.
      4. There needs to be input gathered from stake holders (lake associations/private land owners).
      5. There is a greater need to be more knowledgeable of ALL "Players" inputs; additionally it is important to get the right people plugged in.
      6. Concentrate more on the entire basin, instead of directing a lot of protection effort on the Aitkin areas,

and Lake Winnibigoshish for example. Spread out the flood protection effort. We are all influenced by the entire basin, it's important to keep track and pay attention to it as a whole.

- b. Things that will be involved in the 4-year study.
  1. There will be a series of meetings and hearings over the span of 4-years that will be available to the public so that their voices and ideas can be heard from every aspect.
  2. There will be a website available to the public so that they can remain updated, and be in the know on the progress of the study. It is an effort to keep the public informed and involved. The website is:  
[http://www.mvp.usace.army.mil/project\\_info/rope/](http://www.mvp.usace.army.mil/project_info/rope/)  
The website will offer items such as meeting minutes, and FAQ that you can submit yourself in relation to the ROPE study.
  3. The meetings are a way of getting the public's opinions and gathering suggestions on topics such as keeping on the right track and staying focused on the study.
  4. There will be staff support from (hydrologists, consultants, Corp staff, as well as many others).
  5. One goal of ROPE is to create an Environmental Impact Statement. This plan will focus on balancing wildlife/economic/ecological/water, as well as many other resources.
  6. The study would like to include Bemidji area if funds will allow.
  7. The media is welcome to take part in the effort.
  8. Meeting attendees need to keep a strong commitment in terms of attending most, if not all the meetings in order to keep informed and to be able to effectively take part in the process.
- c. Some "players" or participants that should be included in the study:
  1. Private dam operators, as well as Corps dams.
    - a. Keep peer water control units updated via email about discharges, as well as other activities.
    - b. Example: Knutson Dam was mentioned.
  2. Lake Associations
  3. Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD)
  4. Mayors
  5. Department of Natural Resources (DNR)
  6. Chamber and Commerce
  7. Government/ city officials

8. Representatives and members of the Gull Area Lake Association (GALA)
9. General public (private land owners, resort owners)
- d. Some suggestions from the group about upcoming meetings.
  1. Send notices out at an earlier date, not a week prior to the meeting; this will allow people to arrange their schedules accordingly.
  2. Have meetings in the evening.
  3. Have telephone reminders prior to the meeting.
  4. Possibly have meeting scheduled on the weekends.
  5. A committee chairperson is needed to be in attendance at all of the Gull Lake meetings.
  6. Government officials, a Chamber and Commerce official as well as a representative from GALA are needed at the meetings.
- e. Miscellaneous comments
  1. There was a mention of easements in terms of considerations in a title; no matter how old the easement, it still remains active.
  2. The study will extend from Itasca to St. Paul, however Bemidji will be included if funding is available.
  3. It was also mentioned that there was less participation from the public with the attendance to the meeting at Gull Lake compared to that of the meeting held in the Northern section of the basin. This may be an indication that people are less concerned with potential flooding and flooding issues in the Gull area; not as great of threat to the residents. Individuals that live in the Northern portion show greater concern for flooding in their area.
  4. The question was asked, "Will the Corp give recommendations to local governments about flood and water management/resources?" The answer was no; it is up to the local officials to decide how to handle issues such as runoff, erosion, pollution, and impervious surfaces.

2:40p.m. – Adjourned

Enclosure 1  
Agenda and meeting handouts

