

Memorandum For The Record

10 November 2002

Subject: Flood Control and Erosion Control Task Force Interagency Meeting
Mississippi Headwater Reservoirs ROPE Studies

1. Beginning at 11am on Tuesday morning 5 November, the subject meeting of the Flood Control and Erosion Control Task Force met at the Corps administration building at Gull Lake. There were 10 participants at this meeting and a variety of stakeholders and agencies were represented (see the attached Sign-In Sheet for listing and details regarding the participants).
2. The meeting agenda and handouts were generally followed (see the attached for additional information).
3. Corps and Service representatives provided an overview of the ROPE Study, its scope, and the role of the Flood Control and Erosion Control Task Force and answered a number of general questions about the ROPE study.
4. The primary purpose of this meeting was to form and mobilize this task force. A number of noteworthy points were discussed during this meeting and are summarized as follows:
 - The nature and extent of the flood prone structures inventories was described and technical issues were discussed.
 - The hydraulic modeling that is planned was described and discussed. The need to account for population growth and associated increased runoff was identified as an important aspect of the modeling for future scenarios. Also, there was discussion about how the modeling might account for groundwater affects.
 - There was considerable discussion and concern regarding the lack of erosion site inventories and recognition that some inventories of such areas was needed to adequately evaluate alternative plans... It was suggested that the existing Cass County GIS based soils models might be a good way to help define erosion susceptibility. Also, the Soil and Water Districts would be a good place to check for available erosion inventories. Other useful erosion inventories to obtain include inventories by the Chippewa Forest, Mississippi Headwaters Board, and Aitkin County (for the area near Jacobson).
 - There was discussion about the types of measures that might be used to help reduce flooding or erosion – in the context of changes in reservoir operations.
 - There was considerable discussion about how the Lake Bemidji and upstream reaches would be included in the ROPE studies. It was pointed out that Ottetail Power has indicated interest in participating in a systemwide ROPE but that the Corps and Service do not have jurisdiction or control of their operations.
 - There was some discussed at the meeting about how the Federal flowage rights and how those might affect the ROPE evaluations. It was generally

thought that the flowage rights did not significantly constrict the options that should be considered during the study.

- There was discussion about who should be sought to increase the diversity and effectiveness of this task force. Steve Hughs of the Aitkin County SWCD was mentioned as someone we should encourage to participate. Involvement by Bemidji State University rep/s and a MDNR representative was also suggested...
5. The next Flood Control and Erosion Control Task Force meeting, which will likely focus on consolidating data, evaluating a strawman decision matrix, and identification of pertinent critical data gaps, will likely be scheduled within the next couple of months. It was determined by the group that Grand Rapid would be a good location for the next meeting.
 6. This was a very constructive initial meeting.

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Ed McNally, COE
Task Forces Coordinator/Champion

2 Encls.

Sign-In Sheet
Agenda and Handouts

Distribution: All Meeting Participants

Subject: Initial Flood Control & Erosion Control Task Force Meeting – at Gull Lake on 5 Nov02
RE: Upper Mississippi River Headwaters Reservoir Operations Plan Evaluation (ROPE) Studies

Sign-In Roster

	<u>Name</u>	<u>Organization</u>	<u>Email and/or Telephone</u>
1.	Ed McNally	COE	651-779-0265
2.	Peter Swanson	Cass-winn Lake group	218-751-4651
3.	Bob Treitz	Big Sandy Lake assoc.	218-426-4055
4.	Gregg Struss	COE Gull Lake Dam	
5.	Rick Carlson	COE	651-290-5259
6.	Jim Murphy	COE	651-290-5608
7.	Brenda Glenn	USFS	218-335-8651
8.	David White	Storl. Protect. League	(651) 484-0604
9.	Stan Kumpala	SWCD, Cass Co.	(218) 682-2026
10.	Ross Wagner	Aitkin County	218-927-7305
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Subject: Initial Flood Control and Erosion Control Task Force
RE: Upper Mississippi River Headwaters Reservoir Operations Plan
Evaluation (ROPE) Studies

A G E N D A

Welcome and Introductions

Name, organization you represent, something about yourself or your organization.

Overview and Status of the ROPE

Overview of scope, schedule, budgets, and processes for this study.
(See part 1 of the meeting handouts.)

Explain and Discuss the Roles of this Group and others being formed

Overview of the groups being formed and the roles of each group.
(See part 2 of the meeting handouts and attached Quality Control Plan.)

Discussion of the Task Force.

Are diverse interests represented?

Are key interests missing? If so, how can the group get a representative from that group to volunteer?

What are the potential economic impacts to your organization?

Organize and Mobilize this Task Force

Review and discuss the Ground Rules and Meeting Procedures.

Determine who will lead as Master of Ceremonies (suggest co-leadership).

Determine where, when, and how often the Task Force should meet.

Determine who will record a short summary of minutes of each meeting.

General Open Discussions - *(Focus on organizing the group -- as time permits.)*

Summary and Discussion of any Follow-up Actions Needed

+++++ Breakout Groups for Q&A +++++

INVITATION LIST

Invitees to the initial Flood Control and Erosion Control Task Force meeting as part of the Mississippi River Headwaters Reservoir Operation Plan Evaluation (ROPE) Study.

Mr. Ross Wagner
Aitkin County Courthouse
209 2nd Street NW
Aitkin, MN 56431

Ms. Kathy Brophy
Aitkin City Administrator/Clerk
City Hall
109 1st Avenue NW
Aitkin, MN 56431

Mr. Stan Kumpula
4168 Interlachen DR NW
Hackensack, MN 56452-2169

Mr. David White, Co-Chairman
Star Island Protective League
21 Pheasant Lane
Cass Lake, MN 55127

Mr. Gerald White
Natural Resources Director, Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe
6530 Hwy 2 NW
Cass Lake, MN 56633

Mr. James Lilienthal
Area Fisheries Manager
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
16543 Hayven Road
Little Falls, MN 56345

Mr. Mel Sinn
Minnesota Dept. of Natural Resources
Division of Waters
500 Lafayette Road
St. Paul, MN 55155-4032

Mr. Dan Thul
Minnesota Dept. of Natural Resources
2115 Bachmont Beach Rd.
Bemidji, MN 56619

Mr. Dennis Mears
Otter Tail Power Company
Office Manager, Bemidji Division
P.O. Box 70
Bemidji, MN 56619

Mr. David Brostrom
2159 Berkley
St. Paul, MN 55105

Mr. James Hodgson
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
1601 Minnesota Drive
Brainerd, MN 56401

Ms. Jane VanHunnik
Director, Mississippi Headwaters Board
Cass County Courthouse
P.O. Box 3000
Walker, MN 56484

Mr. Jack Frost
15228 Joe's Lodge Dr. SE
Bemidji, MN 56601

Ms. Brenda Halter - Glenn, Forest Hydrologist
Chippewa National Forest
Rt3 Box 244
Cass Lake, MN 56633

Ms. Mary Blickenderfer
U of M Ext., Shoreline Bioengineering
1861 E. Hwy 169
Grand Rapids, MN 55744

Mr. Bob Greifizu, President of Sandy Lake Association
51500 Long Point Place
McGregor, MN 55760

Mr. Jack Rierdan, Fifty Lakes Association
P.O. Box 38
Fifty Lakes, MN 56448

Mr. Bill Rickmeyer, President Gull Lake Association
1421 Ossego Road SW
Nisswa, MN 56468

Mr. Peter Swanson, Wolf Lake Association
12628 Canepole Crt
Bemidji, MN 56601

Corps Reps

Mr. John O'Leary, Headwaters Operations Rep
190 Fifth Street East
St. Paul, MN 55101

Mr. James Murphy, Engineering Division Rep
190 Fifth Street East
St. Paul, MN 55101

Mr. Ed McNally, Project Management Rep
190 Fifth Street East
St. Paul, MN 55101

Mr. Richard Carlson, Economics
190 Fifth Street East
St. Paul, MN 55101

Mr. Gregg Struss, Gull Lake Operations
10867 E. Gull Lake Dr. NW
Brainerd, MN 56401

Overview - Fact Sheet

Mississippi Headwaters Systemwide ROPE Study

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the U.S. Forest Service are embarking on a jointly sponsored, long-range operating plan study for the Mississippi River Headwaters reservoirs. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Ottertail Power, and Minnesota Power are collaborating Headwaters dam operators included in this planning effort and will help to evaluate and recommend a systemwide operational plan for the Headwaters reservoirs. The Mississippi Headwaters Board and the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe will also play important roles in this study by helping to coordinate and evaluate alternative plans from the regional perspective. This study is called a **Reservoir Operating Plan Evaluation**, or ROPE, study. It began in December 2001 and will continue for the next 4 years.

The process to be used for the ROPE study will rely heavily on interagency and public groups to assist in the plan formulation throughout the study. Accordingly, numerous interagency task forces and local lake groups will be formed, and these volunteer groups will meet periodically to provide technical and public inputs and perspective. The general public will also be kept informed and involved in the study, as well as being asked to review a number of preliminary reports as alternatives are formulated and evaluated.

The primary purpose of the study is to evaluate alternative plans and to recommend a new operating plan for the Mississippi Headwaters Reservoirs system with consideration given to tribal trust, flood control, environmental concerns, water quality, water supply, recreation, navigation, hydropower and more. The plan should provide the optimum benefit to the many interests affected by the operation of the Headwaters dams for the greater public good. Some possible outcomes could be lake level changes, winter drawdown changes, restoration of some sections of river systems, a more natural flow release for the downstream river reach and, in some lake areas, changes in flood control concerns for differing sections of the total system and possibly even the purchase of some land for maximizing efficient operation. In addition, other spin-off projects and beneficial activities in the Headwaters area could result from this study process.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Forest Service and other non-Federal operators are currently looking for volunteers to participate in lake groups and on technical task forces. Each reservoir, including Lake Winnibigoshish, Leech Lake, Pokegama Lake, Big Sandy Lake, Cross Lake and Gull Lake, as well as Lake Bemidji/Stump Lake, the entire Cass Lake chain and Prairie Lake, will have its own lake forum group. These groups will begin meeting this summer. So, if you are interested in volunteering to become a member or simply want more information about this study, please contact the following persons.

Ed McNally, Project Manager
St. Paul District, Army Corps of Engineers
Phone: 651-290-5387
Email: edward.l.mcnally@mvp02.usace.army.mil

Brenda Halter-Glenn, Forest Hydrologist
Chippewa National Forest, U.S. Forest Service
Phone: 218-335-8651
Email: bhalterglenn@fs.fed.us

John O'Leary, Headwaters Operations Manager
St. Paul District, Army Corps of Engineers
Phone: 218-327-4027
Email: john.f.o'leary@mvp02.usace.army.mil

Coordination Groups	Key Members of Each Group	Purposes and Roles of Groups	Relationships with Other Groups and Remarks
Partnering Group	Upper management reps from prime local, State, tribal, Federal agencies, and other key stakeholders.	Provide general study oversight and review, priority for funding, and resolve policy issues.	Provide the Corps District Engineer and U.S. Forest Service Director with common ground recommendations and high level agency and stakeholder positions.
Tribal Interests Group	Reps from Leech, Mille Lacs/Sandy Lake Bands of the Ojibwe Tribe/nation, Dakota Bands, and Corps and Bureau of Indian Affairs representatives.	Provide technical inputs regarding tribal interests into evaluation matrix and review comments.	Work closely with the Corps PM/Operators. PM/District Engineer and U.S. Forest Service reps to establish a constructive nation-to-nation dialogue and avoid tribal trust conflicts.
Downstream Interest Group	Diverse group of interested citizens and officials from Cities of Aitkin, St. Cloud, and Minneapolis, with Corps engineering and Operations Manager leadership.	Provide non-technical inputs regarding downstream effects into the evaluation matrix and for use in the EIS. Review study reports from the downstream public's perspective.	Work closely with the study delivery team through the delivery team downstream interests champions/s.
Task Force Groups Environmental/Natural Resources	Reps from a variety of natural resource agencies and environmental groups (Key reps will include MDNR, COE, and USFS, tribes, MHB, and Environmental Group representatives, etc).	Provide technical inputs regarding environmental matters into the EIS, evaluation matrix, to help collect relevant environmental inventories and set technical evaluation criteria, review reports, and identify environmental issues and opportunities.	Work closely with the study delivery team through the delivery team environmental champion.
Flood Control/Erosion Control	Reps to include City of Aitkin, MHB, various lake association reps, USFS reps, MDNR, Fifty Lakes Association, Star Island Association, and Corps engineering and PM.	Provide technical flood reduction and erosion protection inputs into the evaluation matrix, and report reviews regarding environmental issues and opportunities.	Work closely with the study delivery team through the delivery team environmental champion and with the public involvement and education task force.
Public Involvement/Education	Reps from Audubon Society, MHB, Corps PAO, Corps PM and Operations Manager, and USFS reps.	Help to develop and implement the Public Involvement program. Assist the Delivery Team and associated group champions with logistics of media and public releases/notices and newsletters.	Work closely with the study delivery team through the delivery team environmental champion. Support study awareness and education efforts through the lake groups and various media.

Hydropower and Downstream Uses	Reps include Otter Tail Power, Minnesota Power, MDNR, Aitkin officials, MPCA, MHB, and Corps engineering and operations champions and Forest Service reps.	Provide technical inputs into the evaluation matrix and EIS. Review reports from downstream perspective.	Work closely with the study delivery team through the delivery team downstream interests champion and hydropower and water supply representatives. Interface with the public involvement task force to educate and inform downstream users.
Cultural/Historic Preservation	Reps will include the Minnesota SHPO, tribal preservation officers, and Corps and USFS cultural reps.	Develop baseline data for effects cultural evaluation for input into matrix and EIS, review of reports	Work closely with the tribal interests group and the Corps and U.S. Forest Service cultural reps.
Recreation and Tourism	Reps will include Minnesota Planning and MDNR, University of Minnesota reps, regional tourism groups, and Corps and USFS reps.	Develop baseline data for recreation and tourism effects evaluation for input into matrix and EIS, review of reports.	Work closely with the study delivery team through the delivery team recreation champion. Interface with the public involvement task force to educate and inform downstream users.
Lake Groups			
Leech Lake Chain	Diverse group of local interests representing users of the lake (includes representatives from Lake Association, chambers of commerce, sportsman groups, resorts, lakeshore owners, other immediate downstream river users, other local stakeholders, and interested local citizens).	Forum for non-technical inputs regarding lake chain effects into the evaluation matrix and for use in the EIS. Act as a means of communicating information to public regarding ongoing study progress. Review study reports from the local public's perspective.	Work closely with the study delivery team through the Corps park manager and/or U.S. Forest Service representatives and with the public involvement and education task force to assist with distribution of newsletters and media announcements.
Winnibigoshish/Cass Lake Chain	Same as Leech Chain above	Same as Leech Chain above	Same as Leech Chain above
Sandy Lake Chain	Same as Leech Chain above	Same as Leech Chain above	Same as Leech Chain above
Pokagama Lake Chain	Same as Leech Chain above	Same as Leech Chain above	Same as Leech Chain above
Cross Lake Chain	Same as Leech Chain above	Same as Leech Chain above	Same as Leech Chain above
Gull Lake Chain	Same as Leech Chain above	Same as Leech Chain above	Same as Leech Chain above
Lake Bemidji	Same as Leech Chain above	Same as Leech Chain above	Same as Leech Chain above
Project Delivery Team	Representatives from a number of functional offices in the St. Paul District Corps will serve on this team (see the complete list of team members in this QCP). In addition, non-Corps representatives from the U.S. Forest Service, MDNR, tribal interests, MHB, Audubon Society, etc., will serve on this working team.	Responsible for data collection, evaluation, assessment, plan formulations, and documentation of the ROPE and associated EIS. This group works together to evaluate, screen, and select alternative operation plans. It then provides recommendations to the St. Paul District Engineer and the U.S. Forest Service Director for their approval.	Provide leadership and guidance to the various Lake Groups and Task Forces and receive inputs from those groups for incorporation into the evaluation matrix and use this in the plan formulations and impact assessments. With the assistance of the Public Involvement Task Force, maintain an up-to-date web page for ROPE activities and announcements.