# Appendix A

# Report/EIS Distribution List

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| MN Department of Agriculture<br>90 West Plato Blvd.<br>St. Paul, MN 55107 | | | 1 |
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| MN Department of Transportation<br>Waterways Section<br>Suite 925 Kelly Annex<br>395 John Ireland Blvd.<br>St. Paul, MN 55155 | | | 1 |
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| Marcus Wiechmann<br>Ottertail Power<br>320 Fourth Street<br>PO Box 70<br>Bemidji, MN 56619-0070 | | | 1 |
| **Interest Groups** | | | |
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| Kristen Blann<br>The Nature Conservancy<br>40234 US Hwy 10<br>Cushing, MN 56443 | 1 | | 1 |

# Appendix B

# Scoping/Correspondence

The results of this study would have provided needed information to determine if water quality is a limiting factor of the ecological success of shortnose sturgeon in this river system. When the initial study was conducted, however, high water temperatures and low dissolved oxygen contributed to a shortened experiment time. Although the results obtained were useful, the permit holder wants to repeat the experiment and requests authorization to obtain an additional 1000 fish for that purpose.

Dated: December 8, 2003.

**Stephen L. Leathery,**

*Chief, Permits, Conservation and Education Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.*

[FR Doc. 03–30800 Filed 12–11–03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510–22–S

## COMMODITY FUTURES TRADING COMMISSION

### Sunshine Act, Meeting

**FEDERAL REGISTER CITATION OF PREVIOUS ANNOUNCEMENT:** 68 FR 68875.

**PREVIOUSLY ANNOUNCED TIME AND DATE OF THE MEETING:** 1 p.m., Wednesday, December 17, 2003.

**CHANGES IN THE MEETING:** The open hearing to receive testimony from industry participants relating to the Commission's consideration of the application of U.S. Futures Exchange, LLC, for contract market designation has been cancelled.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Jean A. Webb, (202) 418–5100.

**Jean A. Webb,**

*Secretary of the Commission.*

[FR Doc. 03–30915 Filed 12–10–03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6351–01–M

## DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

### Department of the Army

### Performance Review Board Membership

**AGENCY:** Department of the Army, DoD.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** Notice is given of the names of members of a Performance Review Board for the Department of the Army.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** December 8, 2003.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Marilyn Ervin, U.S. Army Senior Executive Service Office, Assistant Secretary of the Army, Manpower & Reserve Affairs, 111 Army Pentagon, Washington, DC 20310–0111.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Section 4314(c)(1) through (5) of Title 5, U.S.C., requires each agency to establish, in accordance with regulations, one or more Senior Executive Service performance review boards. The boards shall review and evaluate the initial appraisal of senior executives' performance by supervisors and make recommendations to the appointing authority or rating official relative to the performance of these executives.

The members of the Performance Review Board for the U.S. Army Aviation and Missile Command, U.S. Army Materiel Command are:

1. Ms. L. Marlene Cruze (Chair), Executive Director, Acquisition Center, U.S. Army Aviation and Missile Command.
2. Mr. Michael C. Schexnayder, Associate Director for Systems Missiles, Aviation and Missile Research, Development, and Engineering Center.
3. Mr. John R. Chapman, Executive Director, Integrated Materiel Management Center, U.S. Army Aviation and Missile Command.
4. Mr. Paul Bogosian, Deputy Program Executive Officer, Aviation, Army Acquisition Executive.
5. Mr. William C. Reeves, Jr., Director, Integration/Interoperability for Missile Defense and Assistant to the Deputy Commanding General for Research, Development and Acquisition, U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense Command.
6. Dr. Robin B. Buckelew (Alternate), Director, Missile Guidance. Directorate, Aviation and Missile Research, Development, and Engineering Center.

The members of the Performance Review Board for the U.S. Army Research Laboratory, U.S. Army Materiel Command are:

1. Mr. Michael C. Schexnayder (Chair), Associate Director for Systems Missiles, Aviation and Missile Research, Development, and Engineering Center.
2. Dr. Chine I. Chang, Director, Army Research Office.
3. Dr. Grace M. Bochenek, Vice President for Research, Tank-Automotive Research, Development and Engineering Center.
4. Dr. John A. Parmentola (Alternate), Director for Research and Laboratory Management, Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Acquisition, Logistics and Technology).
5. Dr. James D. Gannt (Alternate), Deputy Director, Computational and Information Sciences Directorate, U.S. Army Research Laboratory.
6. Mrs. Barbara A. Leiby (Alternate), Deputy Chief of Staff for Resource Management, Headquarters, U.S. Army Materiel Command.

The members of the Performance Review Board for the U.S. Army Tank-automotive Command, U.S. Army Materiel Command are:

1. Dr. Richard E. McClelland (Chair), President/Director, U.S. Army Tank-Automotive Research, Development and Engineering Center.
2. Mr. John F. Hedderich, III, Associate Technical Director (Systems Concepts and Technology), Armament Research, Development and Engineering Center.
3. Mr. Michael C. Schexnayder, Associate Director for Systems Missiles, Aviation and Missile Research, Development, and Engineering Center.
4. Mr. Anthony B. Sconyers, Chief Counsel, Procurement and Readiness, U.S. Army Operations Support Command.

The members of the Performance Review Board for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Army element are:

1. Mr. Alfred G. Volkman, Director, International Cooperation, Office of the Under Secretary of Defense, Acquisition, Technology and Logistics.
2. Mr. Barry Pavel, Principal Director, Office of the Secretary of Defense.
3. Mr. James Q. Roberts, Principal Director, Special Operations and Combating Terrorism, Office of the Secretary of Defense.
4. Mr. James J. Townsend, Principal Director for European and North Atlantic Treaty Organization Policy.

**Luz D. Ortiz,**

*Army Federal Register Liaison Officer.*

[FR Doc. 03–30801 Filed 12–11–03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3710–08–M

## DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

### Department of the Army; Corps of Engineers

### Intent To Prepare a Draft Environmental Impact Statement for a Proposed Reservoir Operating Plan in Conjunction With the Reservoir Operating Plan Evaluation Study for the Mississippi Headwaters

**AGENCY:** Department of the Army, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, DoD.

**ACTION:** Notice of intent.

**SUMMARY:** The headwaters region of the Mississippi River, located in north-central Minnesota, contains a number of reservoirs operated by various private and public entities, including the Corps of Engineers (Corps) and the U.S. Forest Service (Forest Service). The current operating plans for the Corps and Forest Service reservoirs were developed over 40 years ago and are in need of revision

because of changes in environmental, social, and economic conditions in the region. It is unlikely that the current operating plans provide the greatest net benefit to the resources of the whole system. Furthermore, the operations of the non-Federal (State and privately owned) reservoirs are not coordinated with the Federal reservoir operations. This hinders system-wide objectives such as flood damage reduction for properties adjacent to and downstream of the reservoirs.

The proposed action is to develop a coordinated system-wide operational plan for implementation by the Corps and the Forest Service with recommendations for the operations of the non-Federal dams. The goal of this proposed action is to optimize the system benefits for all affected resources. Some resources may be adversely affected as a result of the proposed action. It is possible that other projects, such as dam modifications and habitat improvement projects, may be recommended under the Reservoir Operating Plan Evaluation (ROPE); however, the implementation of such projects may require additional planning and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) processes.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Questions about the proposed action and Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) can be directed to: Colonel Robert L. Ball, District Engineer, St. Paul District, Corps of Engineers, ATTN: Mr. Terry J. Birkenstock, Chief, Environmental and Economic Analysis Branch, 190 Fifth Street East, St. Paul, MN 55101–1638, telephone: (651) 290–5264.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The ROPE Study focuses on the Mississippi River between St. Paul and Bemidji, Minnesota. The headwaters region of the Mississippi River, located in north-central Minnesota, contains a number of reservoirs operated by various public and private entities. For example, the Corps operates dams on the following waterbodies: Leech Lake, Lake Winnibigoshish, Big Sandy Lake, Pine River (Whitefish Lake Chain), Pokegama Lake, and Gull Lake. Knutson Dam on Cass Lake is operated by the Forest Service. The Stump Lake Dam controls the Lake Bemidji lake chain and is operated by Ottertail Power Company. Similarly, Minnesota Power operates a power dam on the Prairie River upstream of Aitkin, Minnesota. Mud Lake Dam, located downstream from Leech Lake, is operated by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, primarily for fish and wildlife purposes.

The original authorized purpose for the Corps dams was to provide low flow augmentation for navigation on the Mississippi River as far south as the Twin Cities of St. Paul and Minneapolis. However, flood control, recreation, hydropower, water supply, and enhanced fish and wildlife production have subsequently been added as authorized project purposes. Knutson Dam is operated by the Forest Service primarily to maintain lake levels for recreational navigation and environmental purposes.

The ROPE Study and its associated NEPA documentation will be prepared by the Corps and the Forest Service. The Corps will act as the lead agency and the Forest Service will act as a cooperating agency. The primary focus of the ROPE Study will be the operation of the Federal dams in the study area; however, system-wide planning and coordination with the operators of the non-Federal dams will be included as a part of the study effort to the extent that cooperation and resources permit.

A number of general operational changes have been identified that, individually or in combination, will be considered study alternatives. These include changes to current reservoir levels, minimum flow requirements, outflow rates-of-change (ramping), and the timing of and need for reservoir drawdowns. This study will evaluate an alternative plan for dam operation to more closely mimic natural hydrology, and a no-action alternative with no changes to the current operating plans.

Significant resources and issues to be addressed in the DEIS will be determined through coordination with Federal agencies, State agencies, tribal governments, local governments, the general public, interested private organizations, and industry. Anyone who has an interest in participating in the development of the DEIS is invited to contact the St. Paul District, Corps of Engineers.

To date, the following areas of discussion have been identified for inclusion in the DEIS:

1. Navigation (to the extent it is still a Federal project purpose for the headwaters reservoirs).
2. Treaty rights, tribal trust resources, and other areas of special tribal interest such as wild ricing, fishing, and hunting.
3. Flood damage reduction (around the lakes and along the receiving rivers).
4. Fish and wildlife (with an emphasis on enhancement, restoration, and preservation of lake, river, and floodplain habitats).
5. Recreation and related tourism.
6. Water quality (contaminants, nutrients, dissolved oxygen, *etc.*) and water quantity (including low flow augmentation, drought reduction, waste assimilation, and water supply).
7. Erosion and sedimentation (lake and riverine damage).
8. Hydropower.
9. Archeological, cultural, and historic resources.

Additional areas of interest may be identified through the scoping process, which will include public and agency meetings. A notice of these meetings will be provided to interested parties and to local news media.

The Corps has determined that the selection of a combined operating plan for the federally operated headwaters reservoirs has the potential to significantly affect the quality of the human environment. Therefore, the Corps and the Forest Service have jointly determined that the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement is appropriate.

An environmental review will be conducted under the NEPA of 1969 and other applicable laws and regulations. It is anticipated that the DEIS will be available for public review in the winter of 2004–2005.

Dated: September 8, 2003.

**Robert L. Ball,**

*Colonel, Corps of Engineers, District Engineer.*

[FR Doc. 03–30802 Filed 12–11–03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3710–CY–M

## DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

### Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

**[Docket No. RP99–301–100]**

### ANR Pipeline Company; Notice of Negotiated Rate Filing

December 5, 2003.

Take notice that on December 2, 2003, ANR Pipeline Company (ANR) tendered for filing and approval two amendments to an existing negotiated rate service agreement between ANR and Madison Gas & Electric Company.

ANR requests that the Commission accept and approve the two subject negotiated rate agreement amendments to be effective on November 1, 2003 and December 1, 2003, respectively.

Any person desiring to be heard or to protest said filing should file a motion to intervene or a protest with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street, NE., Washington, DC 20426, in accordance with sections 385.214 or 385.211 of the Commission's Rules and Regulations. All such motions

# Scoping Document

# Headwaters of the Upper Mississippi River, Minnesota Reservoir Operation Plan Evaluation

## March 2005


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# INTRODUCTION

## WHAT IS ROPE?

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the U.S. Forest Service are embarking on a jointly sponsored, long-range reservoir operating plan study for the Mississippi River Headwaters reservoirs. This study is called the Reservoir Operating Plan Evaluation, or ROPE. The primary purpose of the study is to evaluate alternative plans for each of the existing reservoirs and try to improve system-wide operations of the Mississippi Headwaters reservoirs system. Consideration will be given to tribal trust, flood control, environmental, water quality, water supply, recreation, navigation, hydropower, and other public interests when evaluating alternatives.

The study process used for the ROPE Study relies heavily on interagency, public, and Tribal involvement and collaboration to assist in the plan formulation and to help develop a shared vision. A number of interagency task forces and volunteer citizen groups have been formed specifically to provide technical inputs and review of study products and to provide local perspective. Significant and ongoing Tribal involvements have been sought to inventory and evaluate Tribal interests in the study area and to insure that tribal trust resources are protected. Numerous interagency task forces and local citizen volunteer groups have periodically met to provide technical and public perspective and to assist in simulation modeling. The general public has also been kept informed and involved via four public scoping workshops and will be asked to review a number of preliminary reports as alternatives are formulated and evaluated. See figure 1 for details about the communications and decision hierarchy diagram used for this study.

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MDNR), Ottertail Power, and Minnesota Power are collaborating Headwaters dam operators included in this planning effort and are helping to evaluate and recommend a system-wide operational plan for the Headwaters reservoirs. Possible outcomes of this study to be fully evaluated and coordinated during the study include reservoir-operating changes at one or more of the 9 reservoir areas in the study area. The nature of the operating changes include: adjusting lake level, revising winter drawdown, changing operations so as to create a more natural flow release for downstream river reaches and in some lake areas, and adjusting flood water storage for flood control affecting sections of the system. The Mississippi Headwaters Board and the Leech Lake and Mille Lacs Bands of Ojibwe also play important roles in this study by helping to coordinate and evaluate alternative plans from the regional perspective.

The study began in December 2001 and should be completed by 2006. In addition to the systemwide operation changes to headwater reservoir operations, it is expected that there will be spin-off Federal projects and beneficial activities in the Headwaters area as a result of this study process. These would be pursued separately using other study authorities. Much more information about this study is available at any of the Headwaters Corps of Engineers field offices, at the Chippewa National Forest

Offices in Cass Lake and online at the Website for this study located on the Internet at: http://www.mvp.usace.army.mil/fl_damage_reduct/default.asp?pageid=143

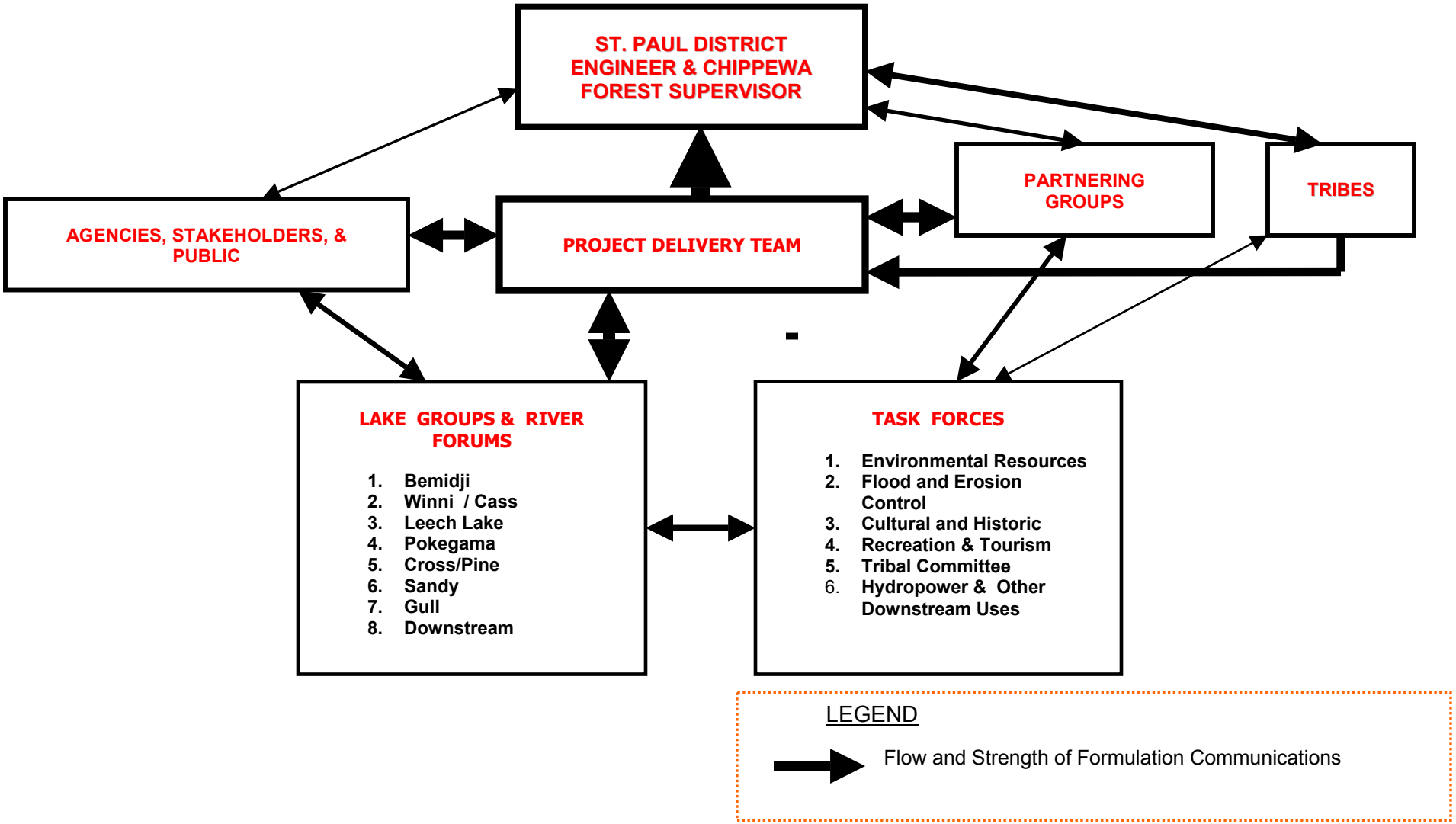
## DOCUMENT PURPOSE

This Draft Scoping Document describes what will be included in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the ROPE Study. It is based on information gathered through scoping efforts that began in some form as early as 1999. The first public meetings were held in 1999 to discuss a watershed-scale study for the Headwaters that included topics pertinent to the current ROPE study. A series of initial informal public workshops to kickoff the ROPE Study were conducted in December 2001. Then, a number of formal public scoping meetings for ROPE were held the week of June 7, 2004. Additionally, ongoing agency and lake group meetings have been held since 2002 to gather technical and user-group opinions and expertise.

The objectives of this document are threefold: 1) To describe the scoping process and results; 2) To list and discuss the alternatives that will be evaluated in the EIS; 3) To list and briefly discuss the significant resources that will be evaluated in detail within the EIS.

This document will be made available on the ROPE website for review by the general public, State, Federal, and local agencies, and Indian tribes. Availability will also be widely announced through the ROPE newsletter and public notices/news releases. Following the incorporation of revisions based on that review, the Final Scoping Document will be posted at the same location.

**Figure 1. Communication / Decision Hierarchy For the Headwaters ROPE Study**



## WHAT IS AN EIS AND SCOPING?

The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) requires Federal agencies to carefully consider all environmental effects of their proposed actions. If a Federal action is likely to have a significant effect on the quality of the environment, the agency proposing the action is required to prepare an EIS. An EIS is a document that contains many components, some which are: a description of the proposed action and alternatives to the proposed action; a description of the affected environment in its present and future states; and a description of the environmental consequences of each proposed and alternative action.

Following the decision that an EIS is required, there are a number of steps that must be followed. The first step is scoping, a process that involves the participation of Federal, State, and local agencies, Indian tribes, and the general public. The most important thing that occurs during scoping is the identification of relevant and significant issues that will be analyzed in depth in the EIS. The scoping process is officially announced in the Federal Register through a Notice of Intent to prepare a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS).

Information gathered during scoping is used to prepare the DEIS, which is subsequently made available for agency and public comment. Also during this time, public hearings are held to further encourage public comment. Following the comment period, a Final EIS (FEIS) is prepared that identifies the agency's "preferred alternative". The FEIS is also made available for agency and public comment. Subsequent to this comment period, a Record of Decision (ROD) is prepared that states the agency's final decision. The ROD must also identify the environmentally preferable alternative, discuss how and why the agency reached its decision, and indicate whether all practicable means to reduce environmental harm have been included in the preferred alternative, and, if not, why not.

For the ROPE, it has been determined that an EIS will be prepared. The Notice of Intent was published in the Federal Register on December 12, 2003. For the ROPE EIS, the Corps of Engineers will act as the lead agency and the U.S. Forest Service will act as a cooperating agency. The Corps of Engineers has the main responsibility for coordination and preparation of the EIS, but the U.S. Forest Service will play an active role in the preparation and funding of the EIS and the ROPE study in general. The ROPE study and the EIS are estimated to cost about $3 million, of which the U.S. Forest Service will pay approximately 15%.

# SCOP NG PROCESS FOR ROPE

In January of 1999, the St. Paul District, Corps of Engineers, in close cooperation with the Mississippi Headwaters Board (MHB), conducted a series of scoping meetings with the public, interested agencies, and Native American Indian Tribes/Bands in an effort to identify water resource problems and opportunities in the Mississippi River Headwaters area. The study area for that effort was essentially the same as that of the

current ROPE. The public involvement and interagency coordination accomplished in 1999 was intended to be a catalyst for leveraging funding and fostering future collaborative planning and implementation efforts. This goal was not met because no cost-share sponsor was identified to assist in the implementation of a comprehensive basin-wide study. Results of the 1999 scoping effort were summarized in a letter report (Letter Report, Upper Mississippi River Watershed, Minnesota). Information from the letter report pertinent to the ROPE scoping process has been included here.

In 2002, ROPE study "task forces" were assembled to represent different resource/user groups within the Headwaters and to provide technical expertise to help guide the direction of the ROPE. The groups are comprised mostly of resource agency personnel from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office, The Nature Conservancy, Public Utilities, U.S. Forest Service, and the Corps of Engineers. These task force groups have met numerous times throughout the study process and have provided valuable assistance in study formulation. The following is a list of the task force groups:

- Downstream Interest Group
- Environmental/Natural Resources Task Force Group
- Flood Control/Erosion Control Task Force
- Public Involvement/Education Task Force Group
- Hydropower and Downstream Uses Task Force Group
- Cultural Resources/Historic Preservation Task Force Group
- Recreation and Tourism Task Force Group

Lake groups, also known as "citizen/stakeholder workgroups" were formed for each of the major reservoirs by inviting all citizens and members of preexisting lake groups to participate in meetings. These lake groups were formed to solicit non-technical public input and to serve as a vehicle for communicating information to the public. Numerous lake group meetings have been held to meet these objectives.

A Partner Group comprised of high-level officials and stakeholder representatives was also convened and briefed at strategic times to solicit ideas, communicate on study related problems and opportunities, and generate understanding and consensus of key managers within key water resource managing agencies. See figure 1 for additional details about the communications hierarchy used for this study.

A ROPE newsletter was developed, named "Around the ROPE", and 3 issues have been released as of September 2004. The newsletter is used to update readers on ROPE events and information and to solicit comments. Currently the newsletter has a distribution of about 632 individuals.

Public scoping meetings were held for the ROPE during the week of June 7, 2004. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the U.S. Forest Service hosted these meetings to gather input on the potential effects of new reservoir operation plan alternatives that will be studied under the ROPE. These meetings were used to express

what potential impacts will be studied in detail within the ROPE, and to obtain additional public input regarding possible alternative plans and associated impacts that should be studied but were not previously identified. These meetings consisted of a presentation of current information on the ROPE followed by a session for gathering public input.

The problems and opportunities identified and documented during the meetings in 1999 were summarized in handout materials presented at each of the EIS scoping meetings. These handouts and summaries of the existing condition and future conditions under the current operating plan (i.e., future without project) were provided to agency representatives at each meeting.

## ROPE PUBLIC MEETINGS

A number of media announcements were prepared to widely announce and provide background about the four ROPE scoping public open house meetings that were co-sponsored by the Corps and the Forest Service. The ROPE newsletter announced the meetings and was widely distributed throughout the study area. A Corps news release was also issued and widely distributed by the Corps Public Affairs Office and was picked-up by a number of local newspapers and radio stations.

The public meetings were informal meetings set up as open houses where interested citizens could come to provide their ideas and concerns and receive answers to questions. A computerized slide presentation lasting about 15 minutes was used to orient the public as they came to the open house and then they were given the opportunity to informally interact with Corps of Engineers and Forest Service representatives. A summary of logistical information about each of these public open house meetings follows:

The first public open house meeting was held in the Twins Cities Metropolitan area from 5:00-7:30 p.m. on Monday, June 7th at the Brooklyn Park Library, 8600 Zane Avenue N. Brooklyn Park, Minn. 55443. About a dozen individuals attended this meeting.

The second public meeting was held in the Walker area from 5:00-8:00 p.m. on Wednesday, June 9th at the AmericInn, 907 Highway 371 N. Walker, Minn. 56484. About 25 individuals attended this meeting.

The third public meeting was held in the Grand Rapids area from 5:00-8:00 p.m. on Thursday, June 10th at the Grand Rapids Area Library, 140 NE 2nd Street Grand Rapids, Minn. 55744. About 10 individuals attended this meeting.

The final public open house meeting was held in the Brainerd area from 5:00-7:30 p.m. on Friday, June 11th in the Administration Building of the Gull Lake Recreation Area, 10867 E. Gull Lake Dr. Brainerd, Minn. 56401. About 10 individuals attended this meeting.

## INTER-AGENCY MEETINGS

In mid-May 2004 a letter of invitation was sent to approximately 150 agency representatives from local, regional, State, and Federal levels of government. These invitation letters announced four interagency workshops/meetings to scope problems in the Headwaters area and requested agency participation. Each of these meeting sessions was to be held in the late afternoon. A summary of logistical information about each of the interagency meetings held follows:

The first interagency meeting was held in the Twins Cities Metropolitan area from 1:30-3:30 p.m., on Monday, June 7th at the Brooklyn Park Library, 8600 Zane Avenue N. Brooklyn Park, Minn. 55443. Unfortunately, no interagency representatives were able to attend this initial meeting – it is likely that the tight budgets of the State and Federal agencies precluded participation in multiple meetings and agencies were focusing on participation in the agency meeting to be held later in the headwaters.

The Second interagency meeting was held in the Walker area from 1:30-3:30 p.m., on Wednesday, June 9th at the AmericInn, 907 Highway 371 N. Walker, Minn. 56484. About 15 individuals attended this meeting.

The third interagency meeting was held in the Grand Rapids area from 1:30-3:30 p.m., on Thursday, June 10th at the Grand Rapids Area Library, 140 NE 2nd Street Grand Rapids, Minn. 55744. About 15 individuals attended this meeting.

The fourth and final interagency meeting was held in the Brainerd area from 1:30-3:30 p.m., on Friday, June 11th in the Administration Building of the Gull Lake Recreation Area, 10867 E. Gull Lake Dr. Brainerd, Minn. 56401. About 10 individuals attended this meeting.

## NATIVE AMERICAN INDIAN MEETINGS

In early May 2004 an invitation was made to representatives of the two Ojibwe Bands of Minnesota that were known to have interest in the study area. Each Band was asked to assist in setting up the logistics for open house meetings with their respective tribal members in order to obtain their ideas and concerns regarding water resources in the Headwaters area. Meetings occurred with Indian representatives of the Mille Lacs Band on 7 June and with the Leech Lake Band on 15 January. The Mille Lacs meeting was held in the Tribal Community Center and began at 5pm and lasted until about 7pm. The Leech Lake Band meeting was held in two locations; from 2pm to 4pm in the Cass Lake American Legion and from 5pm to 8pm in the Northern Lights Casino in Walker. These meetings were very constructive and key inputs were received as a result.

Participants at each of these tribal meetings were documented. A total of about 25 individuals attended these meetings.

### POST MEETING / MAIL-IN-INPUTS

In the newsletter and at each of the interagency, public, and Tribal meetings, a point-of-contact was identified where written or emailed inputs could be provided. To help facilitate written comments, a mail-in form and preaddressed and stamped envelope was made widely available at the public, interagency, and tribal meetings. Comments received in this matter are included with other inputs received during the public workshop and interagency meetings.

## PLANNED SCOPE OF EIS

The results of the scoping process have been used to define the current scope of the EIS. Through continual public, agency, and tribal involvement in the study, it is anticipated that the scope of the EIS will change slightly as new information becomes available. However, the general scope of the study will not change significantly from what is shown here.

### STUDY AREA AND GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE

The Planning Team has identified the study area as the area and resources that may be affected by changes in the operation of the Headwaters reservoirs. In the broadest sense, this includes the Upper Mississippi River Basin upstream of Lock and Dam 2 at Hastings, Minnesota (Figure 1). The effects of operation decrease as distance from the reservoirs and receiving rivers increases laterally. The effects of operation also decrease with increasing distance downstream of the reservoirs. The effects of increasing lateral and longitudinal distances will be evaluated during the study to better define the affected project area.

### TEMPORAL SCOPE

The Headwaters reservoirs will continue to operate into the foreseeable future. It is assumed that the operation plan developed here will be reevaluated in 25 years. Therefore, the EIS will address the effects of changes in the operation plan for 25 years into the future.

### RESERVOIR OPERATION ALTERNATIVES

There are a number of possible alternative operating plans that will be integrated into the plan formulation and screening process. Each alternative operating plan will be created using combinations of different operational components at different reservoirs. All possible alternatives can not be listed at this time but it is possible to list the components that will later be combined to create alternatives. The operational components listed here have been identified during the scoping process. Additional operational components may be developed as the study progresses. The key

operational components to be evaluated in different combinations for some or all reservoirs include:

- No Action, or no change to current conditions (maintain the status quo).
- Reduce flood damages and balance upstream and downstream trade-offs to foster fairness.
- Do not operate for flood control at Aitkin, Ball Club Lake, and other places.
- Operate with different drawdown levels and/or eliminate the drawdown.
- Change the channel capacity restrictions between Winnibigoshish/Leech and Pokegama (restriction is currently 2,200 cfs) to enhance the flexibility of operations during high flows. Raising the 2,200 cfs value may decrease high water events on the Cass Lake Chain and would affect downstream resource values (e.g., may increase flooding but restore some of the natural seasonal variability of flows).
- Operate to mimic nature (e.g., produce higher flow in the spring and lower flow in the fall) to restore or enhance natural resources and processes.
- Conduct periodic and selective drawdowns on reservoirs during the growing season (e.g., like what was done at Pool 8 on the Mississippi River) to simulate drought and enhance aquatic vegetation.
- Operate to maintain or improve recreation opportunities throughout the study area and minimize adverse effects to current recreation users.

## SIGNIFICANT RESOURCES THAT WILL BE ANALYZED IN DETAIL

### *Natural Resources*

The aquatic ecosystems of the Headwaters reservoirs, lakes, rivers, and wetlands have been identified as significant resources based on their scientific, institutional, social, and economic value. A list of important natural resources consisting of species and communities has been identified through scoping. This list includes the following resources: walleye, smallmouth bass, whitefish, greater redhorse, muskellunge, the general aquatic community including invertebrates, submersed and emergent vegetation, undesirable exotic vegetation, wild rice, sedge meadows, ducks, marsh birds, shorebirds and terns, and wetland mammals (furbearers). These natural resources are significant in the study area but their significance relative to the ROPE is still unclear. This is because the magnitude of the effect water level management has on these resources is unknown. These effects will be evaluated in detail through the development and use of resource-specific environmental models. The potential effects to other species, including those with special status such as threatened or endangered will also be evaluated within the EIS.

pollution, at steam-generated power utilities as a result of decreased production at hydropower facilities. Due to the indirect nature of these relationships, analyses on these effects will be conducted at a lower level of detail unless findings warrant more detailed studies.

### *Socio-economic Resources*

There are numerous significant socio-economic resources found in the study area with the potential to be affected by reservoir operations. Private property adjacent to the lakes and rivers in the study area has been identified as a significant resource. Examples of this resource include, but is not limited to, houses, cabins, docks, and related private facilities such as septic systems. An inventory of these resources in the study area was completed in 2001 and 2002.

Economic resources significant for their income stream, such as resorts, marinas, farms, and hydroelectric plants will be considered in the ROPE study as will public resources such as water supplies and infrastructure. In addition, the impact on the Headwaters' highly valued recreation resources such as fishing, boating, nature-watching, hunting, and swimming will be also be considered.

The scoping process identified these resources as significant for consideration in the ROPE EIS. The magnitude of the effects of the evaluated alternative operating plans will determine which of these resources will be analyzed in detail using the best available information.

### *Cultural Resources*

The Headwaters Reservoirs are geographically positioned at the head of North America's largest river, the Mississippi. The area has been a focus for human occupation and activity for 10,000 years or more, and the archaeology of the Headwaters region plays a central role in understanding cultural development not only in the central lakes region of Minnesota, but also in the prairie-plains region to the west, the boreal forests to the north, and the eastern woodlands and southern reaches of the Mississippi River. The archaeological sites located on the Headwaters Reservoir Lakes represent an irreplaceable legacy that warrants preservation.

Hundreds of archaeological sites are known to exist along reservoir shorelines and downstream river reaches in the ROPE Study area. The extent of the damage to archaeological sites along the reservoir shorelines due to erosion and inundation has not been thoroughly assessed. The effects of reservoir operations along downstream river reaches are not well understood and need to be further evaluated. It is clear, though, that Headwaters Project operations are adversely affecting historic properties and that any change in operations may continue to adversely affect them.

Places eligibility of the eroding archaeological sites identified during these surveys. Since these surveys, there has been very little systematic cultural resource work in the Headwaters, with the exception of work completed by the Chippewa National Forest and the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe that centers on the Leech Lake and Lake Winnibigoshish areas. Most of the ROPE study area, including large portions of the Corps' Headwaters Project as defined by flowage easement and fee-title lands, has not been surveyed.

As historic preservation policies under Section 106 have evolved, tribal consultation has played an increasingly prominent role in the process. Through the ROPE study the Corps is addressing both Tribal Trust issues and issues pertaining to Traditional Cultural Properties that may exist within areas affected by reservoir operations. The Tribal Trust issues will be addressed in the Tribal Interest portion of the ROPE study.

A Traditional Cultural Property is a site or place that any group of people may consider culturally or religiously important. This site or place may be considered a historic property if it is eligible for listing or listed on the National Register of Historic Places. This property type would be considered eligible if it plays a significant role in the ongoing traditions of the group and is important in maintaining their social and cultural fabric, traditions and group identity.

As part of the cultural resources review for the EIS, the Corps will assess the status of cultural resource work in the Headwaters and the Corps' compliance with Federal laws and regulations. The assessment will be used in drafting a Programmatic Agreement and an Historic Property Management Plan for the Corps' Headwaters Project. This will be necessary even if the recommended alternative is "no action."

***Tribal Interest***

Tribal Trust is much broader in scope and is not necessarily addressed in a Section 106 review. The issues go beyond historic preservation and are driven by a set of principles, legal concepts, laws, memoranda and executive orders that outline the responsibilities of the Federal government to protect Indian property and lands, rights, and resources.

The ROPE study is addressing Tribal Trust through consultation and contracts with the Leech Lake Band of Chippewa and the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe to obtain general descriptions of the natural resources used traditionally by the Tribe/s or cultural resources that could be adversely affected, or benefited, by changes in lake or river management the study area.

It is critical to the overall ROPE Study progress that Tribal interests be accurately identified early in the study process so that the ROPE Delivery Team can fully incorporate tribal interest data into the optimization and simulation modeling, which will direct the formulation of new operating plans for the Headwater Reservoirs. The intent

is to generate operating plans that would not impact Tribal Trust responsibilities and may benefit tribal interests.

It is important to note that, in addition to incorporating the Tribal Interest Inventory into the model, the Tribes will be asked to provide review comments on the findings and recommendations of the draft ROPE Study report and EIS.

### RESOURCES THAT WILL NOT BE ANALYZED IN DETAIL

On the basis of the scoping process to date, the following environmental conditions have been determined to probably not be affected by changes in reservoir operation: climate and mineral resources.

### EIS SCHEDULE

It is anticipated that the Draft EIS will be available for public review in the fall of 2005. It is anticipated that the Final EIS will be available for public review in the summer of 2006.

## SCOPING COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

During the past two years, various agency and lake group meetings have been held as a way to provide ROPE information to the public and to gather additional information on known problems and opportunities. That information, in addition to that from the letter report, has been summarized here. In most cases, numerous comments were gathered that were very similar. Therefore, comments were categorized and summarized here to reduce duplication.

### FLOOD CONTROL/PROPERTY VALUES

**1. Comment:** It is not known if the Flood Control Guide Curves used to manage flooding, which were last updated in the 1950s, are a good representation of current conditions. Due to significant changes in population distribution in the study area and greater public uses of the lake areas, it is likely that the guide curves need some revision. Flooding impacts to farmland in Aitkin County must be a part of ROPE evaluation.

**Response:** An evaluation of the guide curves will be included in the ROPE.

The guide curves attempt to balance damages between Pokegama Lake, Sandy Lake and Aitkin when the reservoirs are storing water for flood control at Aitkin. In actuality four reservoirs are affected by flood control at Aitkin due to the fact that Winnibigoshish and Leech store water concurrently with Pokegama (to reduce inflow into Pokegama).

It appears that land use and flood damages in the flood-prone rural areas in the Aitkin vicinity have changed since the 1950s (less crop farming, more pastureland). In

turn emergency levees were installed along the Aitkin urban corridor in the 1960s thus changing the flooding picture in the city. Although the guide curves take effect at approximately a 12-foot stage at Aitkin (so storage in the reservoirs must begin at about 12 ft.), rural and urban damages/problems are typically not reported until the stage exceeds the 15 to 16 foot range.

A flood control project for Aitkin is currently being analyzed. A permanent levee system, for example, could reduce the need to operate the reservoirs for flood control in Aitkin's urban corridor. The rural area, however, would still have to be considered. In addition, Sandy Lake is impacted by high water whenever the Mississippi River (Sandy's tailwater) is high due to reduced head across the dam (i.e. reduced outflow). Even with Aitkin's urban area out of the flood control picture, Pokegama (and by implication Winnibigoshish and Leech) may have to operate for flood control at Sandy (and for Aitkin's rural area).

**2. Comment:** During the annual drawdown, a large amount of water is released in the fall and winter from the reservoirs to provide room to store water in the spring. It is not known how the environmental impact to downstream rivers from releasing water in the fall and winter as well as the impact to storing water in the reservoirs in the spring, compares to the damages prevented in the Aitkin area.

**Response:** The effects of operating for flood control at Aitkin on upstream resources and resources at Aitkin will be evaluated as part of the ROPE. Alternative operating plans that would prioritize and balance flood control, environmental, recreation, and Tribal interests will be fully evaluated and coordinated as part of the ROPE modeling.

**3. Comment:** The fall and winter drawdown lowers water levels in the reservoirs prior to the spring snowmelt/breakup period. It is not known how eliminating or reducing the drawdown will impact damage to shorelines from ice action.

**Response:** The general perception amongst landowners is that the winter drawdown reduces ice damage to the shoreline due to lower water levels during the winter and spring. Ice movement, however, is influenced by many factors to include air temperature and snow cover. The relationship between ice damage and water levels will be included in the evaluation of the winter drawdown plan in the ROPE.

**4. Comment:** Can flood-prone farmlands (in Aitkin area) be put into CRP program to compensate farmers for flood losses?

**Response:** The CRP program is administered by the U.S.D.A. Natural Resource Conservation Service; therefore control of this program is outside the scope of the ROPE. However, this question should be posed to the NRCS, as it may be an effective way to idle marginal flood prone farmlands.

**5. Comment:** The regulations regarding Congressional Notification water level limits (WRDA 1988, P.L. 100-676) (see Table 2) need to be modified to account for errors in the language and dam safety modifications.

**Response:** A public meeting was held on October 26, 2002 at Pine River Dam to discuss the proposal for making these changes. The proposal was coordinated with Senator Oberstar's office, the MDNR and other interested parties. The comment period closed on December 31, 2002 and the changes have since been submitted to Congress and are included in the, as yet unsigned, Water Resource Development Act (WRDA) of 2004. If the WRDA bill does not get congressional approval the changes can be incorporated thru the ROPE process.

**6. Comment:** Increases in water levels in the Headwaters could flood septic systems, docks, and other structures located within the flowage rights areas.

**Response:** These potential effects will be considered and evaluated as part of the ROPE plan formulation modeling. The Corps has contracted the expert services of the United States Geological Service (USGS) to evaluate potential ground water effects of changing lake and river levels. The findings of those studies will be integrated into the ROPE study.

**7. Comment:** The water levels on some lakes adjacent to the Mississippi River are affected by fluctuations in river levels both low and high. In some areas, outflows from the reservoirs significantly affect river levels (and thus adjacent lake levels).

**Response:** The effects of low water and flooding will be evaluated for all parts of the Headwaters system in the ROPE. An interagency and stakeholders task force on flood control and erosion control is assisting with the inventory and modeling of flooding.

**8. Comment:** Most reservoirs and some areas on the river have actively eroding shorelines.

**Response:** The effect of reservoir operation on erosion will be evaluated within the ROPE. An interagency and stakeholders task force on erosion control and flood control is assisting with the inventory and modeling of erosion.

**9. Comment**

**Response:** Each reservoir managed by the Corps of Engineers has an upper operating limit (water level) above which the dam must be wide open. With the exception of Gull, all the Corps reservoirs have approximately 1 to 4 feet of flowage rights lands above the upper limit to account for the effects of wind, waves etc. Gull does not have flowage right lands above its upper limit and there are real estate gaps in flowage rights in some lakes. These real estate issues will be evaluated in detail within the ROPE.

**10. Comment:** The upper limit of the Federal flowage right at Sandy Lake is easily exceeded during years of high water.

**Response:** Sandy Lake Dam is located a short distance up the Sandy Lake River from the Mississippi River. When the Mississippi River is high the water level below the dam can raise as high as the lake level above the dam. This essentially shuts off the outflow from the dam resulting in high lake levels, which can exceed the flowage rights elevation.

**11. Comment:** With the exception of Pokegama Dam, all the Corps of Engineers dams have a MDNR maximum discharge guideline, which lists maximum discharges from the dams versus lake elevations. The guidelines were adopted in the 1960s. Are the guidelines effective for current conditions? (Knutson dam does not have a maximum discharge guideline.)

**Response:** The maximum discharge guidelines are rarely if ever used. The ROPE study will determine if the maximum discharge guidelines are needed and if so whether or not a guideline is needed for Pokegama.

**12. Comment:** The role of each reservoir in flood control should be better defined or updated.

**Response:** The simulation model being prepared to assist with the ROPE formulations will provide a new and powerful tool that will be available to fully evaluate system-wide flood reduction and other reservoir functions. Public education is an integral part of the ROPE; through the education process, the roles of the reservoirs will be clarified for the operators, stakeholders, and the general public.

**13. Comment:** Combined releases from Winnibigoshish and Leech are restricted to 2,200 cubic feet per second (cfs). Is this restriction still needed under current conditions? How large a flow would be allowed under downstream flowage rights?

**Response**: This restriction was implemented to minimize flooding conditions in the river reaches between Winnibigoshish/Leech and Pokegama. Problems during high flows have included inundated roads (cutting off access to homes), flooded wild rice beds and other property damage. In recent years some of the affected roads have been raised and some of the property has been relocated. It is not known if the 2,200 cfs restriction is optimal for current conditions. We have flowage rights in the affected reach to an elevation of approximately 1290 feet. The corresponding flow at this elevation has not been determined yet, however it is in excess of 9,000 cfs in the White Oak area. Analyzing this will be a part of the ROPE optimization evaluation.

## GENERAL OPERATION

**14. Comment:** Should consider maintaining a 1301.4 (+/- 0.3 inches) lake level at Cass Lake for the summer pool. This would help to keep June rains from causing high lake water levels and associated shoreline erosion.

**Response:** The effects of lake levels on shoreline erosion in Cass Lake will be analyzed in the ROPE. Erosion susceptibility is a major factor being integrated in the plan formulation modeling. Currently, the normal summer band for Cass Lake extends from elevation 1301.43 to 1301.70 feet. The lake is often times held toward the upper end of the band (1301.79 ft.) following the spring runoff to allow for evaporation during the summer.

**15. Comment:** Operation at one dam affects areas up- and downstream in many ways. All the dams in the Headwaters of the Upper Mississippi River (HUMR) should be operated as a system to more effectively manage water resources.

**Response:** The ROPE will consider up- and downstream effects and will develop an operating plan that treats the Headwaters reservoirs as a system to more effectively manage water resources. A Mississippi River Headwaters Dam Operators Coordination group/committee was formed in February 2002. The members include all the dam operators within the Headwaters system. The group meets each winter/spring to discuss the snow pack conditions, reservoir conditions and dam operations. The group coordinates with each other via email and telephone during the remainder of the year to insure consistent and optimal operation of the Headwaters system.

**16. Comment:** There is an opportunity to coordinate and institutionalize an adaptive management approach to water management and restoration efforts. This approach would monitor project performance and fully network adaptive operational measures to help attain desired operational outputs recommended by the ROPE study.

**Response:** Adaptive management has been utilized in the past to gradually update the current reservoir operating plan. Adaptive management will be utilized in the future as well, but the ROPE will help structure and clarify the process by which operational changes are made. A more aggressive adaptive management strategy will be assessed in the ROPE study and if recommended would include extensive modeling and periodic adjustments to meet planning objectives defined in the ROPE recommendations.

**17. Comment:** Clearly define what adaptive management means if it is to be a recommended strategy.

**Response:** Adaptive management is a systematic process for continually improving management policies and practices by learning from the outcomes of operational procedures. There are six basic steps as follows:

1. acknowledgement of uncertainty about what policy or practice is "best" for the particular water management issue
2. thoughtful selection of the policies or practices to be applied to the water resource
3. careful implementation of a plan of action designed to reveal the critical knowledge that is currently lacking
4. monitoring of key response indicators
5. analysis of the water management outcomes in consideration of the original objectives, and
6. incorporation of the results into future decisions.

## RECREATION

**18. Comment:** If normal summer water levels are decreased, it will become more difficult or impossible to navigate a boat between some bodies of water with shallow connections.

**Response:** The effects of low water levels on navigation will be analyzed in the ROPE. Tradeoffs between recreation benefits and other operating outputs such as environment, cultural, flood reduction, erosion control, and tribal interests will be evaluated and balanced.

**19. Comment:** Changes to the water control plan will need to consider the impacts on the Minneapolis Whitewater Park, lock and dam operations, and the aesthetics of flow over the spillway at Upper St. Anthony Falls Dam. In addition, if a change in the current Water Control Plan is proposed, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources' Mississippi River System-Wide Low-Flow Plan may need to be reevaluated.

**Response:** The effects of reservoir operation will briefly consider these impacts, however they are likely limited because the effect of operation is less significant with increasing distance downstream of the dams.

**20. Comment:** Need to maintain current summer lake levels on Leech Lake to allow for existing Leech Lake Shores sailing access. Except for a couple of times during droughts, the lake levels at Leech have been managed to allow for sailing use and that use has grown to the point where the sailing is a significant recreational use.

**Response:** The effects of water levels on all recreational uses at Leech Lake will be taken into consideration in the ROPE. The tradeoffs associated with maintaining higher lake levels will also be inventoried and fully evaluated with the aid of a headwaters ROPE Prescriptive Reservoir (optimization) model and a STELLA (simulation) model.

## WATER QUALITY/QUANTITY

**21. Comment:** The ROPE must consider the effects to surface water quality, including drinking water, for various factors such as total organic carbon, mercury, dissolved oxygen, and other pollutants.

**Response:** These potential effects will be analyzed within the ROPE at a level of detail corresponding to the likely magnitude of the effect.

**22. Comment:** The Headwaters reservoirs and the Mississippi River face degradation of water quality and quantity, possibly linked to population growth and how the dams on the system are operated.

**Response:** While the effects of population growth are generally outside the scope of the ROPE, the effect of operation on water quality and quantity will be analyzed. For example, the effect of changes in water quantity for various alternative plans upon hydropower generation in the study area will be evaluated and disclosed.

**23. Comment:** Minneapolis and St. Cloud are dependent on the Mississippi River for water supply and do not have emergency water supply plans. St. Paul and Brooklyn Center also use the water but have alternate sources to fill some of the capacity. How will changes to the Headwaters Water Control Plan affect water supply to cities downstream?

**_____:** The utility of using the Headwaters reservoirs as a source for water supply to downstream cities will be quantified as part of the ROPE study. A September 1994 study by the Corps of Engineers indicated that the reservoirs are very limited in their ability to provide for water supply to downstream cities.

**24. Comment:** There have been extensive studies done to evaluate how effective Headwaters reservoir releases are managed during droughts to supplement water supplies in the Twin Cities. These studies clearly show that only a small percentage of the water released from the Headwaters lakes reaches the Twin Cities during drought conditions indicating that they are not an effective means of supplementing the downstream water supplies. This new information will aid in evaluating alternatives evaluations for drought conditions.

**Response:** You are correct about the ineffectiveness of headwater releases to the Twin Cities during drought conditions. The Corps and USGS cooperated to develop such an analysis in 1994 in response to a crisis that occurred during the low water years of 1976-77 and 1987-88. Information and findings from that study will be presented in the ROPE study documentations.

**25. Comment:** The ROPE study should expand on the 1994 report* by examining the implications of a 500- to 1,000-year drought event on water resources as far south as the Twin Cities metropolitan area. The ROPE should recommend whether

low-flow augmentation should remain a Federal purpose and, if so, better define the Corps' decision-making process for releasing emergency supplemental flows. In turn, the ROPE should define the volume of water physically available from the six reservoirs, and how much and how long flow in the river could actually be augmented at critical points to include the Twin Cities.

The Water Control Drought Contingency Plans for the Headwaters Reservoirs, which were compiled in 1992, are in draft form. When will they be completed?

**Water Available from the Mississippi River at Minneapolis and Other Upstream Minnesota Locations During Low Flow Conditions, Section 22 Report, Corps of Engineers, St. Paul District, September 1994.*

**Response:** The ROPE will clarify the process by which extreme flow events, either low or high, will be coordinated and addressed by the Corps of Engineers. Thresholds for certain actions as identified in other reports will be clarified in the ROPE. The impacts of a 500- or 1000-year event will not be analyzed in detail due to the difficulty in estimating the effects of an event that has never occurred. The Corps will summarize the 1994 Section 22 report as a chapter to be included in the ROPE report. Examples of supplemental release scenarios (from Exhibit F in the report) will be expanded and inserted into a table (or similar) for easier reference. The summary will include a discussion of the impacts of releases at Anoka and a clear articulation of the attendant applicable rules and regulations.

The effort to finalize the Drought Contingency Plans is separate from the ROPE study. A scope of work to identify the effort necessary to complete the plans is currently being developed.

**26. Comment:** If there are changes to the current water control plan, the potential changes to the 7Q10 flows will need to be assessed in relation to wastewater treatment plants, along with the economic impacts on those effects.

**Response:** The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's (MPCA) NPDES permits for wastewater treatment plants are tied to the 7Q10 flow of the receiving river (for plants that discharge more than 1 million gallons per day). If a change in the current Water Control Plan is proposed, the ROPE may need to assess the potential changes to the 7Q10 flow at a particular location, and in turn the economic impacts on the wastewater treatment plants. The "7Q10" flow is the minimum flow averaged over 7 consecutive days that is expected to occur, on average, once in any 10-year period. The 7Q10 has a 10-percent chance of occurring in any given year. Due to the statistical nature of a 7Q10 flow, this may require a period-of-record modeling analysis.

**27. Comment:** If there are changes to the water control plan, changes to the total maximum daily load (TMDL) in affected rivers will need to be considered.

**Response:** Potential effects to the TMDL will be considered as a part of the ROPE. Such effects will be considered and reviewed with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency.

## UTILITIES

**28. Comment:** How does the Stump Lake Dam operation by Ottertail Power fit into the system-wide recommendations that may come from the ROPE and EIS?

**Response:** Ottertail Power Company is a cooperator in this ROPE Study and the operator of the Stump Lake dam. The affects of alternative operations at that dam will be generally evaluated to assess affects upon Lake Bemidji and the areas downstream of that dam as part of the ROPE study. However, recommendation made in the ROPE study will be made in the context of “a suggestion” to Ottertail Power and there is no requirement for their acceptance.

**29. Comment:** Since there is no requirement from Ottertail Power to accept "suggestions" from the ROPE Study, will the study include alternative management of the River and Lakes if "suggestions" are not accepted?

**Response:** Because there has been a good faith commitment to systemwide operations through a ROPE process made by the non-Federal operations and because the operations of the non-Federal reservoirs can not substantially affect the downstream Federal reservoirs, we do not intend to include separate Federal operating recommendations for the with "suggested" non-Federal operational changes and the without "suggested" non-Federal operational changes.

**30. Comment:** Steam generation and nuclear power plants use the river water for cooling purposes. Low flows or high water temperatures can limit the amount of power that can be generated, posing a potential problem for the Twin Cities metropolitan area.

**Response**

**31. Comment:** Changes to the drawdown plan will affect hydropower. The potential changes to flow duration (high and low) at particular locations will need to be evaluated, as well as the economic impacts on the hydropower plants.

**Response:** The hydropower plants at Grand Rapids (Blandin), Brainerd (Missota), Little Falls, Sylvan, Royalton (Blanchard), Sartell (Intl. Paper), St. Cloud, Minneapolis (Xcel), and Lock/Dam No. 1 (Ford) depend, to varying degrees, on the increased flow duration that the reservoirs provide. This is particularly true during the normally low-flow winter months when the drawdown flows from the reservoirs can add as much as 2,700+ cfs to the river's base flow. Many of these sites pay the Federal Government for this increase in the river's flow duration as mandated by Section 10(f) of the Federal Hydropower Act. High flows during flooding conditions also have an adverse impact on power generation. If a change in the current Water Control Plan is proposed, the ROPE will need to evaluate the potential changes to the flow duration (high and low) at a particular location and, in turn, the economic impacts on the hydropower plants. Due to the statistical nature of flow duration, this may require a period-of-record modeling analysis.

**32. Comment:** Decreasing the production of electricity at a hydropower plant would increase production at power plants that burn fossil fuels. The resultant increase in air pollution should be considered for any operating plan that reduces hydropower production.

**Response:** Such potential impacts to air pollution will be considered in the ROPE and discussed in the EIS and will be based on existing studies.

## TRIBAL/CULTURAL

**33. Comment**: What process will be used to ensure that the activities related to the ROPE will be in compliance with Sections 106 and 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act?

**Response:** Due to the vast number of resources in the study area and the potential for impacts to a large number of those resources, it would likely require an overwhelmingly expensive and time consuming effort to fully comply with the National Historic Preservation Act prior to implementing ROPE study recommendations. Therefore, the Corps and the Forest Service will negotiate a Programmatic Agreement with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation to govern the implementation of a program to resolve adverse effects resulting from the continued operation of the Headwaters reservoirs.

**34. Comment:** There is considerable concern about the way that the Tribe is proceeding with the contracted inventory of tribal interests associated with the ROPE study.

**Response:** The Federal Government has entered into two separate sole source services contracts with the Leech Lake and Mille Lacs Bands to prepare a written inventory and evaluation of Tribal interests in the study area. The way that this work is to be prepared by the Bands is an internal Tribal matter and in the case of the Leech Lake Band has been controversial.

**35. Comment:** There is a growing concern that shoreline development around the lakes will cause a number of problems. Of greatest concern are lake and river pollution, and degraded lake environmental conditions. These effects would likely adversely impact Tribal uses such as wild ricing and fishing.

**Response:** Controlling shoreline development is outside the scope of the ROPE. However, roles of Government and the private sector in providing stewardship will be discussed in the ROPE documentation and the public education process being utilized in the study can increase awareness of the potential problems with increasing development. The ROPE will consider the effect of reservoir operation on the ecosystems of the headwaters and may implement operational strategies for improving them.

**36. Comment:** High priority should be given to preserve and protect the environment and natural resources long-term over recreational interests. There is concern about recreational users (such as resort and marina operators) having too much power in deciding what reservoir operations are best for Leech Lake.

**Response:** The ROPE is being conducted in a manner to prevent any one user group from unfairly influencing the outcome of the study. Utilizing well coordinated transparent formulation models that will be accessible and operable by the general public is one way to help ensure fairness. These models are up-to-date methods and technologies that will greatly assist in optimizing and assessing a variety of possible changes in headwater reservoir operations.

**37. Comment:** There is mistrust regarding the release of stored lake waters downstream to the Twin Cities under drought conditions. It is believed that under drought conditions water is released downstream to benefit the Twin Cities to the detriment of the Headwaters resources.

**Response:** There have been extensive studies done to evaluate how effective Headwaters reservoir releases are managed during droughts to supplement water supplies in the Twin Cities. These studies clearly show that releases made from the Headwaters lakes do not reach the Twin Cities during drought conditions and are not effective means of supplementing the downstream water supplies. This new information will aid in evaluating alternatives evaluations for drought conditions

**38. Comment:** There is concern that storing water in Leech Lake for flood protection at Aitkin is causing damage to the lake.

**Response:** The effects of flood control operations on the reservoirs and at Aitkin will be analyzed in detail as part of the ROPE.

**39. Comment:** Summer fluctuations of the lake levels can have serious impacts to wild rice production.

**Response:** The potential effects on wild rice will be evaluated and discussed in the ROPE study.

**40. Comment:** There is a belief by some that the "flush theory" is being used by some industries in the area to meet water quality standards and that they are driving (the reason for) the ROPE study.

**Response:** Alternative operations intended to benefit industries by providing them with additional dilution waters has not been requested and is not a formulation objective. However, any affects on industry from a change in dam operation is part of what the EIS seeks to evaluate and disclose (i.e., if water flows impact industrial uses of the river that would be documented in the EIS).

**41. Comment:** Will there be a period of time after the ROPE study recommendations go into affect when the operation is monitored to see if the new operation is working (to determine if the operational changes are good or bad)?

**Response:** A number of possible strategies of future headwaters operations would involve increased monitoring requirements. Specifically, the use of demonstration/pilot projects to test the effectiveness of changes in operation is being considered. Adaptive management will continue to be utilized to strive to reach defined objectives. However, the adaptive management approach will be better defined and by definition must include monitoring. These strategies will require increased monitoring to evaluate the effects of operational changes. Full consideration of the merit of proceeding with such operational strategies is part of the alternative evaluations that the ROPE will consider.

**42. Comment:** If tribal resources are impacted by changes recommended by the ROPE study, what collateral is there for the Band?

**Response:** Protecting the Tribal trust relationships between the Federal Government and the Tribes is mandated and the ROPE study is taking many and effective steps to integrate tribal involvement and tribal resource priorities into the ROPE plan formulation process. Efforts to prevent and/or minimize any erosion in Tribal interests due to a change in operations is being carefully coordinated with Tribal representatives.

**43. Comment:** The Corps and USFS should work with the Leech Lake and Mille Lacs Bands to clarify how the Government can meet its Tribal Trust responsibilities and where possible to identify Tribal interests that can be enhanced as a part of reservoir operation.

**Response:** Efforts to benefit Tribal interests due to a change in operations is also being carefully coordinated with Tribal representatives and will be integrated into the plan formulation modeling done as part of this study.

## ENVIRONMENTAL

**44. Comment:** The current hydrologic cycle of the reservoirs results in reservoir levels and river flows that are different and even reversed from those in an unregulated system. This reversal of the natural condition adversely affects the ecosystem including but not limited to fish spawning (particularly whitefish), rearing, and over-wintering, as well as mussels, meadows, and floating bogs. Also, as a result of current operating plans, there has been a loss of habitat diversity and littoral vegetation in the system.

**Response:** The effects of the current (reversed) hydrologic cycle on these natural resources will be analyzed in the ROPE.

**45. Comment:** Due to the unnatural flow regime, there is an increased amount of lake and river erosion, and sedimentation in the system, including system tributaries.

**Response:** The effects of the current operating plan on lake and river erosion will be evaluated as part of the ROPE. Erosion susceptibility is a major factor being integrated in the plan formulation modeling.

**46. Comment:** What are the benefits of returning to a more natural water regime?

**Response:** The benefits of returning to a more natural water regime will be discussed in detail within the ROPE report and EIS. In general, a more natural hydrologic regime would restore some ecosystem functions, structure, and dynamics thereby creating a more sustainable, productive, and resilient ecosystem that would protect resources from future degradation. This more sustainable ecosystem would help the region to continue to be a destination vacation area and would protect the high quality of life for the citizens of the region.

**47. Comment:** Current understanding of instream low-flow requirements and rate-of-change in outflow rates is better understood now than when they were established by the managing agencies in the 1960's. As a result, refinements to the low-flow and rate-of-change flow regulations/guidelines are possible.

**Response:** The low-flow and rate-of-change operating components will be evaluated and possibly adjusted utilizing current information.

**48. :** The MDNR low-flow guidelines and the federal low-flow regulations are not consistent.

**Response:** The ROPE will examine all the low-flow guidelines/regulations and recommend a plan that is consistent.

**49. Comment:** There are a number of locations in the study area where there is an opportunity to restore aquatic habitats, especially previously channelized river reaches. However, until the river flow regime can be restored to a more natural condition, restoration is not likely to result in significant habitat improvements (e.g., this applies to reaches of the Mississippi River downstream of Winnibigoshish and Leech Lake).

**Response:** Creating more natural flow conditions where practical will be a formulation emphasis of the alternative evaluations being carried out in the ROPE. Modification of the flow regime as a result of the ROPE study may result in spin-off projects that might attempt to restore aquatic habitats.

**50. Comment:** If this study recommends actions that would return the flow regime to a more natural condition, it will be important to monitor the effects of such an operating plan in such a way as to research, demonstrate, and document effectiveness of restoration actions.

**Response:** A number of possible strategies of future headwaters operations would involve increased monitoring requirements. Specifically, the use of demonstration/pilot projects to test the effectiveness of changes in operation is being considered. Adaptive management will continue to be utilized to strive to reach defined objectives. However, the adaptive management approach will be better defined and by definition must include monitoring. These strategies will require increased monitoring to evaluate the effects of operational changes. Full consideration of the merit of proceeding with such operational strategies is part of the alternative evaluations that the ROPE will consider.

**51. Comment:** Temporary lake draw downs of about three feet or less during the growing season would likely improve aquatic emergent and possibly submersed vegetation in the reservoirs. An increase in the amount and diversity of shoreline vegetation may also reduce shoreline erosion.

**Response:** Growing season drawdowns will be evaluated as part of the ROPE study as a tool to improve vegetation in the reservoirs. Improved vegetation would have a variety of benefits, one possibly being bank stabilization. The extent, timing, and duration of drawdown will be evaluated and fully coordinated during the ROPE formulations.

**52. Comment:** Impacts to wild rice must be considered.

**Response:** Impacts to wild rice will be considered within the ROPE.

**53. Comment:** Waterfowl nests and aquatic mammal dens downstream of the reservoirs are frequently flooded and this results in losses of ducks and muskrats each year.

**Response**: The effects of dam operation on ducks and muskrats will be evaluated within the ROPE.

**54. Comment:** The dams act as barrier to the movement of aquatic species. The Corps should consider providing fish passage at each of the dams.

**Response:** Dam modification projects are outside the scope of the ROPE but could be pursued under subsequent spin-off projects. However, the ROPE will recommend that fish passage issues highlighted during the EIS analysis should be evaluated in greater detail in a future study.

**55. Comment:** There is reduced channel complexity and less functioning floodplain due to channel modifications.

**Response:** Channel reconstruction projects are outside the scope of the ROPE, and we will likely recommend that projects for river channel restoration be pursued under other programs. However, returning to a more natural hydrograph will be evaluated in the ROPE, along with the associated benefits of increased habitat complexity and floodplain function.

**56. Comment:** Nesting habitat for common terns has been reduced.

**_____:** Nesting habitat for terns and shorebirds will be evaluated within the ROPE.

**57. Comment:** Should inform the public about aquatic invasive species - this can be achieved by increasing awareness and signage.

**Response:** The public education process being used in the ROPE can be used to help increase awareness about invasive aquatic species; however, an extensive public education program and the construction of signage for invasive species may be beyond the scope of the study.

## EIS PROCESS

**58. Comment:** Because the Mud Lake Dam, operated by the MDNR, is one of the Dams in the Headwaters system that the ROPE is evaluating and will make recommendations regarding, it is desirable to include the State EA process concurrent with the Federal EIS process.

**Response:** The possibility of including the State EA process with the Federal EIS process will be investigated. However, it may be simpler for the State to conduct their process separately if they decide to change their operating plan at Mud Lake.

**59. Comment:** The level of detail that the EIS will go into for various disclosures of impacts needs to be very carefully described in the EIS and the extent that the EIS

covers proposed actions verse utilizing programmatic EIS agreements and/or supplemental EA's needs to be fully documented.

**:** Concur.

**60. Comment:** The alternative reservoir operating plans must be clearly defined.

**Response:** Alternatives will be clearly defined for those that seem reasonable (i.e., for the ones that are not eliminated during the initial screening phase).

**61. Comment:** There is a concern that the public education process being used in the ROPE is not meeting its intended goal. The ROPE public education process should be revised to improve its effectiveness."

**Response:** The public education process being used in the ROPE is continually updated and improved based on new information as it becomes available. The Corps and Forest Service recognize that effective public education is imperative to the success of the ROPE.

St. Paul District GIS CENTER
US Army Corps of Engineers

**Headwaters ROPE Study Basin**

0 7.5 15 30 45 60 Miles

N

**Plate 1**

CEMVP-PM-A 15 September 2006

# *MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD*

**SUBJECT:** Public and Agency Meetings for the Headwaters Reservoir Operating Plan Evaluation, or ROPE Study.

**LOCATION and DATES:** The meetings were held at the following dates and locations:

**Cass Lake (Public): Monday, Aug. 21**, 6:30-8:30 p.m., Pike Bay Town Hall, 15514 State Highway 371 NW

**Aitkin (Public): Tuesday, Aug. 22**, 1-3 p.m., at Aitkin City Hall, 109 1st Ave. NW

**Grand Rapids (Public): Tuesday, August 22**, 6:30-8:30 p.m., at the Grand Rapids City Hall, 420 Pokegema Ave.

**Walker (Agency): Wednesday, Aug. 23**, 1-3 p.m., at the Walker AmericInn, 907 Highway 371 N.

**Walker (Public): Wednesday, Aug. 23**, 5-8 p.m., at the Walker AmericInn, 907 Highway 371 N.

**Brainerd (Agency): Thursday, Aug. 24**, 1-3 p.m., Administration Building of the Gull Lake Recreation Area, 100867 E. Gull Lake Dr.

**Brainerd (Public): Thursday, Aug. 24**, 5-7:30 p.m., Administration Building of the Gull Lake Recreation Area, 100867 E. Gull Lake Dr.

1. Corps of Engineers (COE) and Forest Service (FS) Attendees at some or all of the meetings included: COE; Steve Clark, Kevin Bluhm, Jodi Kormanik, Rick Carlson, Jon Petersen, John O'Leary, Greg Struss, Jeff Steere, Jeff Kleinert, Timm Rennecke, Tim Bertschi; FS; Jeanne Higgins, Chantel Cook, Don Rees, Luke Rutten, Jim Gallagher, Mike Martin, Al Williamson, Nancy Salminen.
2. This memo is intended to summarize the main points of information gathered from participants during the meeting, and to list future actions for modeling revisions, data generation, report formulation, and public involvement strategy development.

## General Comments/Questions Heard at Many Meeting Locations

1. It seemed that most believed that something was driving the study that the COE and FS were not being upfront about, i.e., a hidden agenda. We need to do a better job explaining how the study was started and why.
2. The main focus of attendants was on individual impacts with little or no regard for impacts to other interests in the system.
3. There is a major concern throughout the study area regarding how Ottertail Power operates Stump Lake Dam on Lake Bemidji. Most are interested in whether or not they cooperate with the other dam operators and whether or not the ROPE will

change their operation. The typical answer to these inquiries was that they are participating in the study and the ROPE will make recommendations, but the FS or COE cannot enforce them.

4. Drought was a major topic of discussion. Many wanted to know why the Corps is allowing reservoirs to fall, i.e., why are we not shutting releases off to zero? The typical response was that we are in a drought and all reservoirs and lakes are low. It was also noted that we cannot reduce flow to zero due to negative downstream impacts to the river and other reservoirs.
5. The majority of attendees favored reducing the amount of the proposed gradual summer drawdown and/or delaying the start of it until after the recreation season. Some indicated that they would not accept any lowering of water levels in summer. We will be making adjustments to the plan based on comments received.
6. Aitkin residents were interested in progress on a diversion around Pine Knoll, and believe that it is the solution to their flooding problems. Some have stated that ROPE cannot lead to an acceptable change in operation without the new diversion. In general it was stated that under ROPE we can evaluate the impacts of a diversion, but ROPE does not provide authority for construction.
7. Aitkin is concerned about and basically opposed to any increase in the operating stage for flood control (above 12 feet). Some would like to see the trade-off in protection for events above and below 14 feet before making a decision.
8. Aitkin has requested that we exercise our flowage rights on the reservoirs to protect them from flooding.
9. Most locations wanted a better description of the benefits of the new plan, especially site-specific ones. Environmental and Tribal benefits were explained in general terms, but it will be difficult to describe them to the level a certainty that seems to be desired by most people opposed to the plan.
10. Tribal members attending the meetings felt that the Tribal community has been left out the process. Tribal involvement was explained, but more attention to this is needed.
11. The increase in minimum releases was of particular interest, especially because of the drought. Benefits were explained, but it was apparent that most attendees were not concerned with the welfare of the receiving rivers.
12. Most attendees at the Gull Lake Public Meeting did not feel that the potential environmental benefits were worth the cost to recreational and property-value interests.
13. Many attendees wanted to know if the COE would dredge the channels connecting lakes in order to guarantee access under lower water levels.

**Model Revisions to Consider**

1. Wolf and Andrusia need to be added to the summary in Decision Model.

**Data Generation/Questions to Answer**

1. Need a flood map of Aitkin for different stages (12, 13, 14, 15, 16 ft.).

4. Create minimum release rules for Lake Bemidji.
5. Better articulate environmental benefits, especially to wild rice, and even provide good data and information from specific studies where possible.

6. Does the Mississippi River back water up to Sandy Lake dam under low-flow conditions, and if so, should it affect the proposed minimum release rules?
7. How much stage reduction will result on each of the reservoirs solely from the proposed increases in minimum flows, i.e., how much does it "cost" the reservoir to provide these flows?

**Guidance for Report and EIS Generation**

1. Should present three scenarios for recent normal, wet, and dry years to help provide understanding of how new plan would affect water levels.

**Public Involvement/Education Strategy**

1. Work with other entities to obtain support for proposed plan (letters of support if possible). Possible groups include Tribe, DNR, PCA, Audubon, and TNC.
2. Work on helping increase communication between the Tribal Government and the Tribal community.
3. Consider another round of public meetings as a follow-up to show how we changed the plans in order to generate support.
4. Work on actively providing information to public on proposal, likely through the use of radio interviews, the newsletter, and new releases. Communication plan will be updated to include specific strategies for this effort.
5. Conduct some individual outreach to resort owners, lake associations, municipalities, etc. to inform more vocal interests and provide some assurance that their concerns are being addressed.
6. Consider holding future public meetings specifically for Big Sandy and the Whitefish Chain, as people for Aitkin and Gull Lake, respectively, can overwhelm the discussion at those locations.
7. For future meetings it might be a good idea to segment the general discussion period to focus separately on the specific areas of interest.

# COE-Recorded Notes From Public Meetings – Unedited

# Week of August 21, 2006

## Cass Lake Public Meeting (8-21-06)

Six Corps employees and six forest service employees directed the meeting. Approximately 30 residents from Bemidji and Cass Lake in attendance.

**Question & Answers:**
1. Current levels of water surface on Cass Lake? How does that compare to proposed levels? (Resident)
Ans. 1300.9 (Luke), at where the proposed plan would recommend (Steve) We are where we should be at this time of year, the past few years were high (Resident)

2. How is Otter tail operating their dam?

3. What year did winter drawdowns start?
Ans. Roughly decades, current operating plan has been in effect since 1988. (Chantel)

4. Lowering lake levels 6" from what?
Ans. 6" lower than proposed plan, specifics still need to be worked out. (Steve)

5. Why isn't the 6" total lowering in the models?
Ans. We worked hard and want feedback first. (Steve)

6. What is levels of Winnie Currently? (Resident)
Ans. 1297.33, 7" below current band (Jeff)

7. Recreation considerations are greater in lower reach, what made the priority? (Resident)

8. Minimum flows are artificial, during droughts should we shut off flow?
Ans. Extreme drought would be needed to make flows go to zero (Steve)
Isnt this the worst drought since the dustbowl?
Ans. Not sure (Steve)

9. Is the Knutson dam adequate for releasing water?
Ans. No, we don't have as much control as people might think. The capacity of the dam is dictated by downstream conditions. (Luke)

10. Could lower flows be attainable realistically?
Ans. No, probably not.

11. Whats up with nature? Some water up (Devils Lake) some down (Missouri River)?
Ans. None, too broad

12. What is the primary reason you are operating the dams? Are your projects to far sighted and not short sighted enough?
Ans. Primary reason is for navigation, although it doesn't serve that primary purpose anymore. How do we make a balanced approach work for everyone, we are trying to do this using modeling and will continue to do so in the next six months. (Kevin) Balanced objectives involve both ecosystem as well as flooding. (Steve)

13. Wolf and Andrusia don't seem to be shown as well as other reservoirs, why?
Ans. Stage vs. flow plots for Wolf and Andrusia do exist. (Jon)

14. Can we have plans for high and low water.
Ans. Yes, flood control for high water, and drought contingency plan for low water, but the primary analysis is during normal years. Drought team has gotten together to analyze low releases. It is too hard to predict the future though to say much more. (Steve)

15. Is power dam (Stump Lake dam) too politically run? It has a big effect on Wolf, Andrusia, and Cass, maybe laws can be changed to have it better run?
Ans. There is an optimized run for Bemidji, come see modeler after meeting. (Jon)

**Statements & Responses**
1. Never had to close resort but this year 24 inchs lower than normal since 1990, needs to be extended partnership with Stump Lake Dam. Recreation wise if no chain from Andrusia to Cass users will diminish. Can't keep lower and raising docks as fluctuations are very great, look at minimum flows from dam. (Resort Owner-between Wolf & Andrusia)
Ans. Stump Lake dam is part of study and they have restrictions about lake levels.

2. Opposition to drawing down lakes due to freezing of critical habitat when at a low level (reed bed), rotten smells created (2003 drawdown). (Resident)

3.Larger boats cant get into dry land?? (Resort Owner-between Wolf & Andrusia)

4. Drawdown in July and August is too early and should wait until after labor day or Oct.

5. On Wolf and Andrusia we are hitting bottom a lot and this is a bad time to propose lower water levels. (Resident) Cass seems to be not as bad off as Wolf and Andrusia (Resort Owner).

6. Need to look at all years, not just this year a drought year. Star Point and other north portion of Cass lake has seen damages from erosion and trees falling. We need to lower the lake for erosion damages (bank erosion) and not just look too short sighted during this dry year. We are being damaged by high water rather than low water.

7. Each cabin is brining in $20,000 per year outside of lodging costs, that is huge and we cant afford to loose anymore resorts. We are interfering with nature by having minimum flows in a drought. (Resort Owner)

8.Current levels on Cass (1300.9) is too low for the normal lake elevation. Wolf & Andrusia are lakes that don't get deep quick, so the change in target from early summer to late summer should be small, less than 6". (Cass Lake resident)

9. Stump Lake dam should be a larger part of study. (Resort Owner)

10. Send Jeff Klienart % time below target/6" below target/1' below target graph.

**Summary**
1. Cass Lake proposed lower lake levels in late summer are too low and should be increased; lowering the proposed target in late summer should be approximately 3-4" below early summer target.

## Aitkin Agency Public Meeting (8-22-06)

Eight Corps employees and one forest service employee directed the meeting. Approximately 30 residents from Aiktin in attendance.

**Question & Answers:**

1. Any shakeout on decision of Pine Knoll? (Aitkin Resident)

Ans. Pine Knoll diversion in models, however we are not able to construct the Pine Knoll diversion using the ROPE study. (Steve)

2. Same question, about Pine Knoll. (Sandy Resident)

Ans. None

3. What is actual flowage rights at Sandy Lake and actual structures underwater?

Ans. 1222.31 is flowage easements rights corps has, 24 structures with first floor below this and 109 structures based on ground elevation. (Jeff and Rick)

5. At what flow rate in total river is flow diverted down the diversion? (Aitkin Resident)

Ans. Jodi will get back to you

6. How are frequencies above 14 varied from current rules?

Ans. Results at Aitkin stage need to be re-calculated and we need to get back to you. However, we will likely bump above 14 feet slightly more often based on incremental flows. (Steve)

7. What is the flood damage potential at Pokegama, seems that the banks are higher and is not being used to store when it could. Why doesn't Pokegama fluctuate more, as it is a big lake and could hold more water? (Resident)

Ans. Flowage rights may be a factor. (Resident)

8. Will the definition of the floodplain change?

Ans. No, it will not change.

9. If the late summer is lower for the summer target why not keep the early summer the same? (Resident)

Ans. The goal is a gradual reduction of lake levels from early summer to late summer. (Steve)

10. Sandy is impaired due to phosphorus (P) and can not cause increased levels, how is this being considered?

Ans. Lake operation is not a large influence, and we are not adding P. (Steve)

11. Why don't you use the available storage at reservoirs when you are proposing a higher flood stage at Aitkin?

Ans. 14 flood stage gives more flexibility in flood stage operation.

12. NWS meeting a few months ago proposed flood stage to 14 feet, does this affect the way the Corps operates its reservoirs?

Ans. NWS is based on frequency where the corps is operated based on balanced damages.

13. In plot of current vs. proposed flows at Aitkin, there is more flooding during spring and this doesn't make sense?

Ans. The higher flows making the average higher is during more frequent (lower) flood events. Environmental resources show benefits with higher flows in spring and all the natural flow regimes of a river. (Steve)

14. If a flood condition at Aitkin how would flood rules change?

Ans. Winnie and Leech are not operated towards flooding currently but would be in the proposed plan. (Steve)

15. Is the amount of water in a reservoir converted to Acre-ft. (resident)

Ans. Yes, especially during flooding. (Jodi)

16. Is Knutson and Blandin Dams controlled? Modeled?

Ans. Knutson is and Blandin is not in model, real life Blandin works with Pokegama on a daily basis (John)

17. Is the decision to go from 12 to 14 system wide?

Ans. Yes, this will help the entire system. Plot of Aitkin Hydrograph shows benefits of operating at 14, benefits are to reservoirs. (Kevin and Jodi)

18. In Aitkin land is low and if water levels are held high and large rain just hits Aitkin will there be more flooding? Are there benefits to Aitkin county from going from 12 to 14?

Ans. Yes there will be more small events. We will analyze more benefits for next meeting as this meeting shows mostly averages.

19. What are the effects of a 1" rain if stage is 14, would we go to damages?

Ans. Yes, most likely you would hit flooding with heavy rain and at 14.

21. So you are going to dump all the water at us during floods? Maximum flood capacity will be in effect if over summer target at reservoirs?

Ans. 14 feet would be hit more than currently due to higher operation levels. Corps and NWS are working better together today than ever before and can do a better job operating and predicting for floods.

22. Who is making the ultimate call on changing flood stage from 12 to 14? And is public input taken and when?

Ans. In our draft plan there will be hearings based on public input, very official and formal. Comments are taken and then final plan made and sent to HQ and changes could be implemented if approved. (Kevin) The decision will be made by the recommendation of the Corps ROPE team and finally by the Col. (Steve and Kevin) 14 is our recommendation and is variable and could be changed. (Jodi)

23. Where is the benefits to Aitkin in larger floods due to the change from 12 to 14? Please show the amount of time flood stage will be at 15 compared to 16. How about a guess?

Ans. Our model cannot due this, maybe in the fall. We will show the positives in fall, and this will be key. (Jodi and Rick)

24. Sandy Lake flowage limits are 1222.+, Pokegama flowage rights are 1280.42. 100 year flood protection is 2' lower than flowage rights. Is this why we aren't operating Pokegama for flooding at higher levels? Big Sandy is done correctly where it seems Pokegama is not.

25. Pine Knoll never gets acknowledged, why?

Ans. ROPE doesn't have authority to make changes to Pine Knoll, it is outside the limits of the ROPE study and cannot be changed. (Kevin) The diversion is modeled and some results will be available in the future. There is a study started, however it was put on hold until results of the ROPE study are complete. (Steve) B/C ratio are completed and stated. (Rick)

26. There is no word to the director of utilities at Aitkin about the ring levee.

Ans. Rick will get that to them. (Rick)

27. Prairie River Dam?

Ans. Not in the model

28.

**Statements & Responses**

1. Comparison graph showing local flow to Aitkin does not represent flow backwatering into Aitkin from diversion. (Aitkin Resident)
2. In 2001 erosion was huge at Sandy and needs to be considered. (Resident)
3. Flowage rights on reservoirs are not being used and more flooding at Aitkin is resulting and no flowage rights exist. (Resident)
4. Sandy drawdown a foot higher than current would result in less storage during high snowing years.
5. Holding higher stages at Aitkin is bad due to no way to get rid of water if there is a heavy rain event. Poor situation with pine knoll. (Resident)
6. Speaking for the city of Aitkin, individual opposes proposal of increasing flood stage from 12 to 14.
7. Without looking at Pine Knoll you are wasting your time doing this study. The effects go all the way upstream and need to be realized. (Resident)

**Recommendation**

1. Comparison to other cities downstream of reservoirs flood operating compared to flood damages should be included in next meeting.

2. Show contour/floodplain mapping of 12,13,14,15,16 foot stages, to show how far away the water is during 12-14 foot maps.
3. Show % changes from current plan to proposed plan, (flow, stage, etc.) This is an idea to relate to some individuals.
4. Show increased risk at Aitkin is decreasing with better communication between regulator and NWS, that is why other reservoirs can operate closer to damages.

## Grand Rapids Public Meeting (8-22-06)

Eight Corps employees and three forest service employee directed the meeting. Approximately 15 residents from Grand Rapids in attendance.

**Question & Answers:**

1. Who is funding this study? Any private funds?

Ans. Corps is funding this 100% under operations and maintenance budget, however the Forrest service is funding 15%. (Steve) No private funds. (Kevin)

2. At Pokegama it seems it is the main reservoir for flood protection and Winnie and Leech aren't used. Pokegama is taking brunt of negative effects and not benefiting Aitkin. Will there still be a curve for Aitkin flood stage plotting Pokegama and Sandy? Water level at Pokegama raises considerably after flooding, what are impurities in water coming into the Lake?

Ans. No answers, too many questions.

3. Is Ottertail Power operations going to not follow our changes and cause problems? Is riprap on Winnie, Leech, and Pokegama in 1940's still in the planning phase?

Ans. Riprap would not be a good thing for the ecology of the lakes. (Steve) In 1980's a study was done and riprap was placed at high risk sites, during the ROPE study our answer to this is lower the entire reservoir by 6". (Chantel)

4. Have you looked at the Bowens strip that has eroded considerably in the past few years in the models? On other sides of the lake will there be more constant lake levels so low water levels aren't a problem for getting boats through small channels.

Ans. The ROPE study answer is to lower water levels to minimize erosion. There are + and – to both current rules as well as proposed rules. (FS) Wild Rice has been looked at on the whole for this study, even though each individual site has not been analyzed. (Steve)

5. What are the major benefits for the proposed plan?

Ans. Ecologic benefits for downstream users on the river are the major driver for our proposed plan. (Steve) The proposed plan would benefit the overall abundance of wild rice on a reservoir, because the water levels are more similar to natural levels; this would give the best results in the long term. (Steve)

6. For the germination of wild rice, what are the levels necessary?

Ans. Germination is dependent on water temperature and it is good to have higher water temperatures in spring.

7. Has anybody studied the act of congress for Lake Winnie, which states the taking of land for the operation of the reservoir? There has nothing been paid for the land within the lake, has anything been looked at in this initial taking of land?

Ans. Total operating limits are what is in act of congress and we are following this. (Jodi)

8. Why do we have to change the operation since this is an act of congress?

Ans. Since operation limits are very wide, the ROPE study is looking at normal summer bands and drawdown targets. (Jodi) For a healthier environment we are proposing a new plan, also the less drastic proposed drawdown will be more safe. (John O)

9. Are the ice safety meetings open to the public?

Ans. Yes (FS & Jeff)

10. How is White Oak affected in terms of ice conditions and a total lake freeze/fish kills.

Ans. Water level at White Oak correlate to Winnie and Leech releases. There will be a likely lower water surface early in winter due to drawing down earlier, however the late winter water levels will be the same as currently. (Steve)

11. Do we hold Pokegama high for Northern spawning?

Ans. No, however the proposed plan would aid in northern spawning levels. (Steve)

12. Pigeon dam is not being regulated, how can we regulate this?

Ans. Tribe is allowed to regulate Pigeon dam, however we have not seen this being regulated by the tribe. We may be drying up this lake due to the proposed plan, which would affect major wild rice beds. (Resident)

13. Has there been coordination been made with other dam operations in the headwaters?

Ans. Ottertail Power is part of our study and we will make a recommendation to them, however it will be up to them to make a operation modification.

14. Are there still meetings with dam operators in the headwaters?

Ans. The last one was two years ago, and they have each others contacts in case of an emergency, communications network is in place. (John O)

15. Who is the operator of Pigeon Dam?

Ans. FS or MN DNR are the operators and we will look into it. (FS)

16. Is the Leech Lake Band getting any kick back for this study?

Ans. The tribe is not getting a kick back for this study. The tribe was hired to do a study and we can get you that report. (Steve)

17. Are the higher water levels going to balance the lower water levels?

Ans. The larger range for summer target is what is referred to in the question, the lower water surfaces will help reduce erosion?

18. What are the benefits of lower lake levels? Is erosion the only one?

Ans. At Blandin our current operating plan will keep them happy, they do not need our help. (John O)

19. What about the proposed power plant in Grand Rapids?

Ans. It was shot down and is not being proceeded. (Resident)

20. How is the effluent being discharged being looked at?

Ans. If we proposed lower minimum release it would be a problem, however we are not and so our proposed plan does not affect effluent releases. We are not working with effluent dischargers to try to get them more capacity. (Steve)

21. Has the MN DNR been involved in this study?

Ans. Yes, they have had biologists and hydrologist involved and results shown. (Steve)

**Statements & Responses**

1. If we lowered reservoirs 6" it would significantly help reservoirs in an erosion stand point.
2. Interested in seeing overflow weirs compared to normal current rules in compressed decision model.
3. Drawdown is a problem on Lake Winnie due to the large drawdown. Child endangerment due to fast large drawdown. We are not addressing safety concerns of winter ice thickness.

Ans. We are actually proposing drawdown slower and not as far. (Steve) FS and others (Ice safety Task Force) have tried to show people safety concerns. (FS)

4. Wild Rice seem to have poorer results due to higher water surfaces in spring and lower water surfaces in fall, this relates to all wild rice production.

Ans. Wild Rice hasn't totally adopted to the way the operation has been since the operation has been intact.

5. We should be changing the way effluent is being put into the river not the way we are "flushing" water down. Why are we changing the way we are operating when it seems to be working fine!
6. I feel the tribal members should be at the table making the decisions.

Ans. We have been in contact with the Leech Lake members and it seems that we are proposing changes the members want. (Steve)

7. We have made requests for a ROPE study update. Need decision makers at these public meetings. Generations will be hurt by the changes you are proposing for the native people.
8. Lower water levels in late summer is <u>not</u> good for wild rice harvesting. (Resident)
9. End of duck season is the end of wild rice harvesting.
10. Raybe Lake, to the NW of Winnie, needs to be looked into more.
11. The community feels left out of the decision process and is just trying to catch up on what is going on for this study; this is why we feel negatively towards the proposed plan.
12. A representative would most definitely attend meeting for the ROPE study if invited. There is a large group of interested parties and we are having trouble getting them all together.
13. Adaptive management approach would be good for analyzing results of changes.
14.

**Recommendation**

1. Need more plots showing benefits to the system in terms of wild rice and environmental.
2. Tribal community should be invited to the meetings between the corps and the tribal leaders.
3. Plots of benefits for both high and low water on Winnie, Leech, and Pokegama.

## Walker Agency Meeting (8-23-06)

Eight Corps employees and two forest service employees directed the meeting. Approximately 10 government agency employees from Walker and Bemidji in attendance.

**Question & Answers:**

1. Please clarify the minimum release changes for Winnie? (John O)

Ans. Winnie min release would go from 100 cfs to 210 cfs for normal conditions and it still up for debate for drought conditions. (Steve)

2. Is there anything built into the proposed operations in how the levels change in time, too fast?

Ans. The models can not analyze the ramping rates, and we should probably look into this more outside the models. (Steve)

3. Is there a reason for the large drop from early summer to late summer at Cass? (Chantel)

Ans. Yes, we will likely make it more gradual in the draft proposal. (Steve)

4. What is the drought trigger on Leech for minimum flows? (Chantel)

Ans. 1.8 feet below the bottom of the summer band. (Steve & Jodi)

5. How open is the discussion on the 6" total drop of lake target levels?

Ans. This is something we should discuss now. (Steve) We heard last nigh that wild ricers are very concerned about lake level decreases affecting wild rice production. (Chantel)

6. What are the long term benefits of the 6" total drops?

Ans. Our models cant determine this and more research would be needed. (Steve)

7. For the proposed plan will water levels be allowed to rise with large rainfalls in drought years?

Ans. Yes. (Steve)

8. How are the different overlays/benefits weighed in the models? How is environmental benefits going to be analyzed for benefits?

Ans. Ultimately the decision makers will have to decide how to weigh overlays, and this will be both political and technical. (Steve) We have not attempted to put a dollar value on environmental benefits. (Steve)

9. One of the main goals of the proposed plan is to benefit the ecosystem, are we going down the right path for the proposed plan? (Chantel)

Ans. As a local I think it is well worth spending time evaluating and trying to make changes that help the ecosystem, especially on the river near White Oak. There is so much resource that is being managed opposite to how it should. Anything we can do will be positive.

10. What is the coordination between agencies in operating dams? Seems some dams don't operate their dams in coordination with neighboring dams.

Ans. Ottertail dam seems to be the main problem (Steve) Ottertail does tell us what they are doing, however the guidelines may be somewhat different. (Luke) Most run of river dams operate similarly, however there could be better communications. (Steve) Hopefully this ROPE study will give better operating guidance. Bemidji seems to be a half foot higher than it should be. Erosion on Bemidji is likely due to ice jacking in winter and should be analyzed in proposing new drawdown targets. Ottertail power is wiling to take advice on dam operation, they have even asked for help in low water years. Ottertail power has been hesitant to do anything different due

to being liable for damages or poor environmental results. (MN DNR) Residents downstream of Bemidji are upset that Lake Bemidji is still within their summer band and everyone else is not. We will try to work together with Ottertail in creating a coordinated operation plan. (Chantel)

11.

**Statements & Responses**

1. Suggest showing the results of changing the minimum release on lake levels. (Tim B.)
2. People that recreate on these lakes may have a mis-perception about what is natural. (Chantel)
3. It seems the short term effects of the system are the main concerns of citizens. (FS) We don't have the funding to do a through job of showing future long term benefits. The choosing of a plan will be very likely affected by citizen and their short term concerns; we need help from all agencies in showing the public benefits to the system. (Steve) A wild ricer will want to see the trade offs of future benefits directly related to them, as well as all users of the system, this should be done in the EIS. (FS) Predictions to future benefits with specific animals or etc. will be tough. (Steve)
4. It seems that it is unfortunate proposing lowering water levels in a dry year.
5. It is unfortunate the dam operation is not evaluated more often, it should happen more often then every 40 years.

Ans. Our goal will be to implement an adaptive management approach to the new operation plan. Funding will dictate how much time we will be able to analyze the adopted plan. (Steve)

6.

**Recommendation**

4. Create minimum release rules for Bemidji (Steve)
5. Adjust wier elevation for unregulated plan, similar to other reservoirs, which will modify proposed release rules. (Steve & Jodi)
6. Create operating rules for Lake Bemidji Environmental and Economic plans, this will be compared to Run of River and Proposed plans. (Jon or Jodi)
7. Include Wolf and Andrusia in Lake summaries tab of Decision Model. (Jon or Jodi)
8. Send link for decision model to Dan Thul. Lake Bemidji, Wolf and Andrusia should be checked for quality assurance to make sure benefits are stronger for the proposed plan compared to current rules; concern has been noted that average water levels and water level variation are higher for the proposed plan than currently. (Jon & Jodi)
9.

## Walker Public Meeting (8-23-06)

Seven Corps employees and three forest service employees directed the meeting. Approximately 15-20 residents from Walker and Bemidji in attendance.

**Question & Answers:**

1. Why are you proposing a drawdown in the middle of summer?

Ans. The drawdown in later summer is actually a natural lowering of water levels which aids in keeping flows from the dam higher. In general our proposal is aiming at attaining more natural river flows and lake stages. (Steve)

2. Please clarify the % lower than summer band and etc plot?

Ans. There will be more time spent at lower levels due to lower proposed lake levels in later summer.

3. In 2004 there was a meeting with Leech Lake Band, what was the outcome of the meeting?

Ans. We have had continuous meetings with the band and the outcomes include wild rice and all natural resources are equally important. (Steve)

4. The partnership between the Corps and FS seems to leave out the tribes.

Ans. The partnership is a cost share partnership as well as EIS development. We have been working directly and frequently with the tribes and getting their recommendations included in our proposal, even though the tribes name is not part of the study. (Steve and Chantel)

5. At Lake Winnie how do today's water levels compare to the proposed water level?

Ans. At Winnie and Leech we try to stay around the middle of the summer band, however we use the band to not have to make changes continuously. (Jodi)

7. Archeological and Recreation seemed to go hand in hand in the slides, why?

Ans. It was most likely coincidental and are most likely inversely related. (Steve)

8. Why would you propose lowering water levels in a drawdown if it is a problem to fill back up?

Ans. The drawdown is not lower in the proposed plan than the current plan.

9. How do you feel for the higher band of the proposed limits on Winnie? (Jodi)

Ans. During floods Cass and Winnie have held water to benefit Aitkin and the Twin Cities. (Resident)

10. Who is the operator of Federal Dam?

Ans. The regulator is in St. Paul and makes decisions based on gauges. (Steve)

11. If you make a change here and not in St. Paul then someone will be angry?

Ans. There are no other reservoirs on the Miss between Gull and St. Paul and the system will be operated in conjunction.

12. With the lower water levels if another drought hits there could be large problems. (Resident)

13. Could you use the models to forsee and prevent a drought by keeping water levels higher?

Ans. There are other sources of inflow to Cass, like the turtle river and etc. (Chantel)

14. If all the reservoirs were operated at 6" lower than currently, would the BFE be changed, most notable at Aitkin?

Ans. Damages occur at a specific stage BFE would not be changed with a changed operating system.

15. How will Ottertails operation change due to the ROPE?

Ans. We will be making a suggestion to Ottertail about how to operate but it is up to them weather they accept it.

**Statements & Responses:**

1. The tribe should have a major say in what is going on here, for years we have been here ricing, and using other resources for making our living. I am afraid there will be issues in court due to this proposal. (Resident) Director of NR for tribe have been working with the corps. (Other Resident)

Ans. Even though our formal partnership is financial; all people with comments, including residents and the tribes, are part of the partnership even though they aren't paying for the study. (Kevin)

2. We (tribe) have paid dearly in the area. The tribe shouldn't be next to other overlays in the comparison. I am concerned about the water levels, and if the water levels are dropping and the corps is responsible then it doesn't look good for the corps, however if the wild rice falls the ricers/tribe are the ones that it hurts. (Resident)

Ans. What is the reservoir that is your main concern? (Kevin) Leech Lake (Resident) Currently, at Leech we are at drought stages, which means the situation is out of our hands as operators. The natural drought conditions are what is causing the low water levels right now. The proposed plan is very similar to natural drops of a lake in summer. We have worked very hard the past few years to incorporate the tribal recommendations into our proposed plan. (Steve & Kevin)

3. If political influences are driving water level drops on Leech Lake then we are really being hurt. (Resident)

Ans. All corps reservoirs are in drought conditions and are being dropped similarly. Natural lakes are dropping even more. We are almost at drought minimum flows allowed by law, which shows we are very low.

4. On Cass Lake we sell the area as a chain of lakes and is holding on by a thread, with these low water levels recreation benefits would severely be hurt. There have been many cancellations at resorts due to low water and proposed lowered normal conditions make me nervous. (Resident)
5. In high water Ottertail lets water in 4 times faster than we can get rid of it at Knutson and causes flooding. I am against lowering water levels in August, and against increasing the band, especially on the low end. (Resident)
6. At Aitkin there is no flow in the diversion channel and Pine Knoll is our limiting factor. I am surprised to hear what I am hearing here.
7. Cass Lake is part of a chain and we are the same as everyone being in a drought, but for the proposed plan the changes you are proposing seem to extreme. We need to keep our chaining potential. In August we could handle 1301.4 but not much lower than that. At Cass our problem is that you are lowering the water levels too fast in September as recreation is still important then. Our new proposal should include more steps in the drawdown. (Resident)
8. There are many very important benefits to keeping lower water levels, for example spawning habitat is diminishing, bull rush is diminishing, and sediment is destroying the lake resources. So we are asking you to rethink the benefits of lowering water levels even though the recreation costs.

**9.** In a comparison of current vs. proposed for this past year there would have been virtually no difference due to the drought conditions. Congressional notification levels could cause congress to step in. (Kevin & Jodi)

**10.** You couldn't reach the flowage easements due to the constraints of the Knustson Dam.

**Recommendation**

10. Fix typo on Sandy structures damaged in STELLA (Jon or Jodi)
11. Fix plot parameters (0.1min to -0.1min) on Lake summary tab of decision model. (Jon or Jodi)
12. For both Winnie and Cass the proposed summer band should be 2" above current in May, 1" above in June, even in July, 1" below in August, and 2" below in Sept., then continue with proposed plan drawdown. Erosion should analyzed for this proposal. (Jon & Jodi)
13. For all reservoirs the May and June proposed target should be slightly above current levels and explained that the proposed plan would benefit drought years. (Jodi & Jon)

## Gull [Brainerd] Agency Meeting (8-24-06)

Eight Corps employees and one forest service employees directed the meeting. Approximately 5 government agency employees from Brainard in attendance.

**Question & Answers:**

1. Is the current vs. proposed plans drawdown similar to what has happened in 2003?

Ans. Yes, prior to 2003 drawdowns didn't start until mid December. (Ray)

2. What is STELLA?

Ans. A simulation model showing flows and stages of the river and reservoirs, and correlating benefits of overlays. (Jon)

3. There has been a panic email sent out to resort and residents and lake owners, how many resort owners have been at the meetings?

Ans. Cass, Andrusia resort owners were present; there were no Winnie, or Pokegama resort owners present. We went to the resort association last summer and stated we would come back with proposals. (Chantel)

4. How do water levels compare this year to last year?

Ans. This year water levels are much lower, and all lakes in the region are. (Steve)

6.

**Statements & Responses:**

1. There is erosion susceptible areas on Cross Lake, where there are lake restoration projects underway. (MN DNR)

2. Residents have been happier with earlier and more gradual drawdown has reduced ice damages. (Ray)
3. For the plot of % time water level is below bottom of summer band, 6" below, and 1' below, the time frame should be the last 40 years rather than last 70 years. (Ray)
4. STELLA seems confusing.

Ans. Yes it is and that is why we are not showing it to everyone. (Steve)

5. Since lake levels are down, resort owners are panicking and get very defensive about any changes; I will be very willing to help get your word out to resort and tourism market owners. (MN Tourism)
6. You need to be able to show people the ecological benefits to the system.

Ans. Show Current vs. Proposed Release at Winnie and how the flows are much more natural for proposed than current. (Steve)

7. This is a very dry year and the only question is will the dry weather continue, similar to the 1930's.
8. I do think the Current vs. Proposed plan releases at Winnie is very useful even though they are very complicated. Maybe you are trying too hard to fluctuate things, but if you are trying to be more natural then this proposed plan seems to fit.
9. You need to show better the benefits to residents in order for them to think about costs and benefits. (MN Tourism)

Ans. In the northern reservoirs we felt that the environmental concerns were more important, which is why we stated the presentation the way we did. (Chantel)

10. You need to concentrate on showing that you wont make things worse and likely make things better. We know that Winnie is very susceptible to erosion and will be a major issue which you need to show if you can help it or not. Do the best you can to show that it will likely be better even if you cant guarantee it.

Ans. Our direct answer is to lower water surfaces, however it has trade offs. (Chantel)

11. Your plots seem to be the right kind and make sense to me.
12. I think it good you took a closer look at Aitkin since it is a major issue.
13. Aitkin is one of the top spots for birding. (MN tourism) Different land use in the Aitkin area may shift benefits for an area.
14. People up here are so afraid of change that we need to really push the environmental benefits, and more directly like the benefit to the fishery over the long run.

**Recommendation**

1. A set of follow up meetings might be beneficial, results that should be shown include for all reservoirs, the current target, bands, 2001 (high water year) and 2006 (low water year) water surfaces, and another plot with the proposed rules, bands, and what would have happened in 2001 & 2006. These plots should be calculated using volume calculations.

## Gull [Public] Meeting (8-24-06)

Nine Corps employees and one forest service employees directed the meeting. Approximately 45 residents from Brainerd in attendance.

**Question & Answers:**

1. Where are we now on Gull Reservoir?

Ans. 1193.4 lake elevation (Jodi)

2. How does what you do on a regulated lake like Gull affect other lakes not regulated in the watershed?

Ans. No, unless the lake is directly connected to the regulated lake. (Steve)

3. So you want to lower water levels in summer so that weeds grow? We are trying to get rid of weeds!

Ans. Yes, we want to lower water levels to promote aquatic vegetation growth. (Steve) We need to get back on track and finish the presentation then answer questions. (Kevin)

4. Is the Gull river not part of the study?

Ans. The Gull river is definitely part of our study and a very important part. (Steve)

5. How does the long term benefits for environmental benefit recreation?

Ans. Fish populations will be very evident. (Ans)

6. Who will protect our property values?

Ans. We will have to wait on questions like that. (Steve)

7. Do you look at the weather predictions before you operate?

Ans. Yes, I look at those constantly. (Jodi)

8. Comparing the change in minimum flow wont the lake drop more throughout the summer?

Ans. No, the plots compare the exact same conditions for 2006.

9. How come when you get too much water you can let it out but cant stop flow when it is dry?

Ans. There are minimum release guidelines from US Congress, which protect the riverine habitat downstream.

10. How can we get congress out of MN?

Ans. The drought minimum releases are still uncertain.

12. Why do you want to raise minimum flows?

Ans. Benefit ecology downstream of the dam, in the riverine habitats. (Steve)

13. The reservoirs were created for navigation, however do not operate that way. Since we no longer need that why are we afraid to go to congress?

Ans. We have congressional notification levels because we are close to damaging structures. Since we are so close to damaging levels that is why we don't want to have to go to congress if we are able to release. Congress is worried about the economics of flooding. (Kevin)

14. When you start lowering water levels in July do you plan on helping us since we cant get our boats out?

Ans. Bishops creek would not be accessible if the lake elevation is below the current upper band. (Resident)

15. Are you releasing more water to grow weeds?

Ans. We release water to do many things, downstream as well as Gull Lake environmental benefits.

16. In the % below plot, I am confused about how much lower we will be?

Ans. Below the lower limit we are at the mercy of nature. (Kevin)

17. In a shallow lake (Round) with hot temps there are fish kills. What is the impact of water temperature variation?

Ans. We have not done a study, however with increased veg temps reduce. I cant tell you exactly the amount of fish kills during the current vs. proposed plans. (Steve) With the slightly higher water levels during droughts like 2006 there should be theoretically less fish kills. (Kevin)

18. With the increased summer bands then you will be in the danger zone of flood damages more often?

Ans. No, during the summer the upper band will not bring water levels near flood damages. (Kevin)

19. Has the MN DNR commented on this?

Ans. They have been involved all along and have had the chance to review or proposal, however I am not sure they will have an endorsement, we don't have to have their endorsement to move on. (Steve & Kevin)

20. Which lake above Gull feeds into our system? Any reservoirs?

Ans. There are no reservoirs upstream of Gull or Cross, all inflow is uncontrolled. There is no way to give you water, an ecosystem that is isolated, however you do feed into the Mississippi River. Each reservoir has a set of guidelines that will be analyzed individually. (Kevin)

21. Are there individuals not associated with the lakes spurring this investigation?

Ans. Nobody out of state is making decisions, the regulators are here at the dam and in St. Paul. We have been able to operate at the current levels, however that could change. (Kevin)

22. How do change the way people have power and can dictate how to regulate our lake?

Ans. None

23. Why do we want to change this plan?

Ans. Technology is better, increased development, usage has changed, aquatic health, this is why we are here tonight.

24. Do we want to stick to the current plan or the proposed plan? (Kevin)

Ans. I think we will be higher in the summer and that is better and I will take home tonight that we will be just as high or higher even under extreme circumstances. (Resident)

25. How will the proposed plan effect smaller lakes (Round)? How would we change back if this proposed plan doesn't work?

Ans. Currently resident call Greg, Greg calls Jodi, and work out compromises if we are within the limits. Operating is an adaptive management approach. (Kevin)

26. Who is the congressional lison?

Ans. Oberstar,

27. This seems all good if the current players are in (Jodi, Greg, etc.) how would this change if there are new players? Is this three inch band a statue, and how is that changed? What are the influences down south that is calling for more water?

Ans. Env. Benefits spurred increasing minimum flows, which called for increasing early summer targets and has given us a win-win situation.

Ans. The lower band really has no value and a col. would never choose to operate at the lower end of the band. (Jodi)

29. There has been so much talk about Gull that I would recommend a separate meeting for Cross. We have been very satisfied with the levels of Cross the past few years during normal conditions, with increased targets in early summer there could be increased erosion. With the higher minimum flows, could there be lower water surfaces in summer?

Ans. We have operated right at the middle of the band for quite awhile. Is there a good elevation for the second half of summer? (Jodi)

30. Do you have factual information about the effects to residents on the lakes? You seem to have totally changed everything in the past year on the ROPE study.
31. What are the environmental benefits?
32. We are working to keep the lake clean and are being proactive, we don't want more weeds?

Ans. The emerging vegetation is better than algae. (Steve)

33. Are you proposing that lower water levels will decrease water levels? (Steve)

Ans. Yes, the weeds would go crazy! (Resident)

34. Is the March meeting another public meeting? Will the resident be able to respond to the proposal?

Ans. Yes, it is a formal meeting and will take advice from citizens. The March meeting you can say anything you want which will be included in the proposal. Following that the Col. Will approve the proposal, or not, or suggest a plan B. (Kevin)

35. Is there an appeal process? Where will the proposal be posted?

Ans. Around the Rope will state when the meeting will be, and we will try to make the meeting as open as possible. You can go to your congressman or to the Col of the St. Paul district. (Kevin)

36. The Col seems to be a reasonable person. We don't see the goals of this study, or the benefits of your proposal.

Ans. In Alexandria there was good quality lakes, however as development occurred the ecosystem degraded and they are crying for help. We hope you think about this situation.

37.

**Statements & Responses:**

1. The raised early summer lake levels allow using raised minimum releases. (Resident)
2. If we are in a drought with no inflow then by zeroing out outflows the lake elevations would increase minimally? (Kevin)
3. The Bishops Creek should be a navigable channel. (Resident)
4. No it never has been and you were given false information. (Resident)
5. Take last year (2005) which was a good year, so in Aug, 2005 we would have been slightly higher under the new proposed operating plan. (Resident)

8. On a lake that is impaired (Lake Margaret), we ask lake front owners to analyze how you are managing your lake fronts. We are asking you to relook at the increased minimum flows if fish habitat is satisfactory in the recent history. (Lake Assoc member).
9. Gull and all these around here are recreational lakes and support the economy.
10. We want the summer band to be 1194.1 all summer. (Resident)
11. Erosion could be a factor if water levels are higher more often.
12. There has been so much talk about Gull that I would recommend a separate meeting for Cross. We have been very satisfied with the levels of Cross the past few years during normal conditions, with increased targets in early summer there could be increased erosion. With the higher minimum flows, could there be lower water surfaces in summer?
13. These are recreation lakes and if the people want environmental lakes there other lakes that serve that purpose.
14. At Cross we are very happy and don't understand why you want these changes.

Ans. Is your recommendation to keep it exactly the same as current? (Kevin)

Ans. Yes, we are happy.

15. We want out lake (Gull) to be high into October so we can use our lake longer in the year.

18. Lake quality is not an issue here and if it becomes a problem we will fix it.

Ans. When you realize a problem it is too late. We are trying to do our part to create a quality ecosystem. Keeping current rules is an option. (Steve)

19. We haven't heard the benefits of this proposal.

Ans. The models show many results, however very technical and we want you to look at it with us to see the benefits.

20. Shifting water surface targets up is good and down is bad!

**Recommendation**

1. The % time below summer bottom band, 6" below and etc. plot should be reconsidered for use in a public meeting, specifically at Gull and Cross.
2. More simplified graphs showing benefits. Separate graphs for the current rules vs. the proposed rules, and remove the lower summer band if it really has no triggers.
3. Send benefits to Lake Associations, as they have technical personnel and may be more accepting of our proposals and spread that word to their members.
4. Have separate Cross and Gull Lake public meetings as their interests are different.

## August 2006 Public Meeting Comment Sheet Evaluation

| Location | | Question: |
|---|---|---|
| | | **1. What factors should study team members consider when selecting the best plan for operating the reservoirs?** |
| **Gull** | 1 | By making river a priority with environment you are hurting Gull and Round fish and habitat. |
| | 2 | Lower lake level effects on an impaired lake - (Lake Margaret) |
| | 3 | Recreational needs/tourism D/N cause lower water levels at mid summer - wait until September 15 - October 15 |
| | 4 | As it appears to Gull, I very much agree with the proposed plan. I believe it achieves a good balance. |
| | 5 | The people who pay taxes and live on the waterway should have the most input. Not some environmental engineer trying to impress his or her boss re-inventing the wheel. |
| | 6 | Raising the Lake levels year around Gull Lake ( these are shallow Lakes) |
| | 7 | We need to see some factual information. I am very concerned about the changes that are proposed. |
| | 8 | Impact on smaller lakes, connected to Gull - Navigation of Bishops creek, property values go down w/lake levels. These are recreational lakes not environmental. |
| | 9 | Erosion improvement/control - This is false. Assumption - Increasing flow rates out of lakes will increase erosion and silthing not decrease it. More plants will grow with lower levels - All lakes are fully populated - Lake shore owners will not allow weeds/plants to gorw - they will cut them. |
| | 10 | Lake levels - Longer discharge flow over a longer time period maintain higher river levels with out sudden surges, resulting in higher river level flushing sewage drain. Providing canoe & kayak opportunities and preventing four wheel from entering the river. |
| | 11 | Kevin is a control freak - Impact on shallow bowl lakes in watershed. |
| | 12 | Keep Gull Lake level at high end all the way through mid Sept. Drop after mid Oct. to truly allow Round Lake to be part of the Gull Lake chain. The rate at which are are taxed. Crow wing county is the fastest growing county in MN. Is your plan accounting future growth on the Gull Lake chain - Lake pumps, boat ramps etc. Gull is a vital recreation use area/lake with a huge economic impact. Low water level = people will go to other lakes. |
| | 13 | In the Gull Lake chain, low water is a problem. Higher water is appreciated. |
| | 14 | Impact of decisions affecting all users, not just them downstream. |
| | 15 | I have no problem with the proposed target but why undo the overall size of band use the same size of band as before. I hope the comments will have impact on the initial decision. |
| | 16 | No comments - |
| | 17 | Environment, protections of lakes and rivers downstream. |
| | 18 | Not legible |
| | 19 | Improve lake level resevoir stability - rather than increasing downstream flow! Normal outflow for 40 years has been 20cfs why change? Keep it stable at 20cfs. |
| **Walker** | 20 | A |
| | | more natural functioning system should be primary goal. |
| | 23 | Open effective communications with Dam- U.S. Forestry & Ottertail power dam operators. |

## August 2006 Public Meeting Comment Sheet Evaluation

| Location | | Question: 1. What factors should study team members consider when selecting the best plan for operating the reservoirs? |
|---|---|---|
| Walker | 24 | No comments - |
| | 25 | No Comments - |
| | 26 | No comments - |
| | 27 | No Comments - |
| | 28 | Not Legible - |
| | 29 | Economical and environmental. User of the water should have input into the operation of the area lake. |
| | 30 | That northern reservoirs are important to water secretion. Keeping in consideration the lower contours in Cass Lake and the channels that connect them to their sister chains. If the water is lowered and the Cass Lake chain will degrade in quality for everyone. |
| Walker Agency | 31 | No Comments - |
| | 32 | Long term ecological benefits to lake and river systems, especially on the upper portion of the system. More equally weight ecologic, economic, social factors to better account for the lack of ecologic considerations now. |
| Gull Agency | 33 | Lakeshore homwowner and recreation needs & desire St. Cloud, Mpls, St. Paul water supply needs Lake water quality & aquatic habitat in stream flow needs |
| | 34 | More natural flow regime |
| Aitkin | 35 | I think the models and rationale has been through - obviously the discussion has more emotional charge due to past flood events - citizen concerns about future catastrophes. |
| | 36 | Input on critical infrastructure, impact on human activities, environmental |
| | 37 | FLOOD PROTECTION |
| | 38 | 1. That any plan leaves adequate "room" to react to unusual "events" 2. That any plan be phased in over a 3-year period to determine that experienced results match predicted results. |
| | 39 | Look at the Big picture but be sure that individual concerns are considered. |
| | 40 | Pine Knoll - Obstruction - Legitimate $$ impact on moving flood stage to 14 - Aitkin |
| | 41 | No Comments - |
| | 42 | No comments - |
| | 43 | Not Legible - |
| | 44 | Elimination of Pine Knoll ledge along with revising benefitting area up to Lake Itasca. Look at other diversion channel - same issue from Cedar Brook & Mississippi West to M. River |
| | 45 | See #3 |
| | 46 | Watch the effect of bank/shore erosion on Big Sandy. Will changes in the plan affect nutrient loading (Ph) on Big Sandy. |
| | 47 | Take more consideration to flow in river that you can't control. Which with higher flows you can control will result in more damages |
| | 48 | Absolutely include Pink Knoll in rope model & expand cost benefit of change to upstream. |
| | 49 | The controlling factor is still the choke point at the Pine Knoll |
| | 50 | Reducing Aitkin's responsibility to favor upstream entities. |
| | 51 | Flood control below Sandy |

## August 2006 Public Meeting Comment Sheet Evaluation

| Location | | Question: 1. What factors should study team members consider when selecting the best plan for operating the reservoirs? |
|---|---|---|
| Aitkin | 52 | The whole system - I don't understand how the Corps can be working on "models" for the past several years but still have so many unanswered questions ie, using 13' for Aitkin instead of 14' - no data - why wouldn't that have been modeled at this point? |
| | 53 | No Comments - |
| Grand Rapids | 54 | Who's benefiting from this? Who doesn't!! |
| | 55 | Not legible - |
| | 56 | Modulating draw down |
| | 57 | No comments - |
| | 58 | No Comments - |
| Cass | 59 | The team should consider upgrading the Knutson Dam to better control reservoir levels in summer. |
| | 60 | Cass Lake is largely recreational! Summer drawdown in July is to soon after Labor Day would be better. |
| | 61 | 1. Later release of water from end of July to late September or early October. 2. Impact of suggested lover summer levels on ability of boats to travel through the chain of lakes. |
| | 62 | Artifically controlling H20 levels is causing many issues. |
| | 63 | Consideration for those owing land nad buildings on the reservoirs. |
| | 64 | You state we are currently in a drought condition and water levels are low, but you state the proposed levels of the proposed plan are at our current levels - we are unable to access the water at the end of our dock because the levels are too low. We have 6 inches at the end of our dock and this is with 150ft of dock all we need is 1ft in order to use our property and water. |
| | 65 | Envronmental concerns and providing recreational opportunities through mid Augus |
| | | y |
| | 74 | No comments - |
| | 75 | Improving the integrity of the terrestrial and aquatic habitats on the river segments below each reservoir especially in th upper portion (Cass, Winni and Leech) drop the reservoir levels by 6" on Cass, Winni and Leech. |
| | 76 | Environmental vs. Economics - Lake levels & River level needs to be navigatable in all |
| | 77 | No comments - |

## August 2006 Public Meeting Comment Sheet Evaluation

| Location | Question: |
|---|---|
| | **1. What factors should study team members consider when selecting the best plan for operating the reservoirs?** |
| **Cass** | 78 Primary Reason |

## August 2006 Public Meeting Comment Sheet Evaluation

| Location | | Question: 2. Do you feel the environmental health, or conditions of the reservoirs is degrading? Why or why not |
|---|---|---|
| Gull | 1 | No - Our environment is only negatively affected by the amount of water drained from Gull and Round Lake. |
| | 2 | No Comments - |
| | 3 | No, water is clearer, level is fine too low right now. |
| | 4 | There are a number of factors, besides level that impact health. So I'm not so sure that level alone. But I do see merit in the plan as explained. |
| | 5 | No. Our lake clarity is among the highest in the state. We have plenty, more than enough aquatic plants. |
| | 6 | If levels are lowered all will be degrading. Resorts and all business will be hurt this will cause great hardships. |
| | 7 | I feel that the present operating plan is working and we need to work very hard on many issues. I don't see how this proposed plan will solve absolutely anything for the better. |
| | 8 | NO- |
| | 9 | Health No - Conditions Yes - Draining practices/policies of the COE are increasing errosion and silting in the lakes |
| | 10 | Yes - River not sustained at a higher level for longer duration. |
| | 11 | No Comments - |
| | 12 | Yes, because the water level is too low. Our Lake Round is 90% developed. I'm not going to allow weeds to grow on my beach. My property value isn't going up because I have beautiful weeds in my front yard. |
| | 13 | Yes, more weeds increased aging of lake. |
| | 14 | No Comments - |
| | 15 | No Comments - |
| | 16 | No Comments - |
| | 17 | Yes, increased development limits use of low impact development (LID) |
| | 18 | NO! |
| | 19 | Water quality is already degrading - increasing exit flow will not improve the conditions within the reservoirs. |
| Walker | 20 | Very degrading! Because it's a form of genocide. |
| | 21 | No Comments - |
| | 22 | I feel we are holding our own. |
| | 23 | No, the fishery seems healthy, erosion minimized, good water clarity. I am very apprehensive of a plan that lowers planned target levels by 5-6" (3-4" is more reasonable) |
| | 24 | No, my resort has seen cleaner water of the last 28 years. |
| | 25 | No Comments - |
| | 26 | No Comments - |
| | 27 | No Comments - |
| | 28 | Not Legible - |
| | 29 | Environmental of health of majority of lakes is maintaining. There are better ways to improve health of lakes than to lower water levels. |
| | 30 | Yes, I believe that if water levels lower it will force water recreationalist to harm the environment with boat props, extending docks and dredging harbors, channels and other waterways. |

## August 2006 Public Meeting Comment Sheet Evaluation

| Location | | Question: 2. Do you feel the environmental health, or conditions of the reservoirs is degrading? Why or why not |
|---|---|---|
| Walker Agency | 31 | No Comments - Env. Health is degrading - Invasive species & decline in water quality are examples. |
| | 32 | Current system of dams eliminated connectivity of the river system. |
| Gull Agency | 33 | Don't Know. |
| | 34 | Yes, slowly to many ecologically ignorant rich people. |
| Aitkin | 35 | Big Sandy & other associated lakes classified impaired. Some DNR opinions regarding channel problems - not throughly resended - substantial state time/dollars into watershed work. |
| | 36 | Degrading human activities around the reservoirs |
| | 37 | NO- |
| | 38 | No Comments - |
| | 39 | No comments - |
| | 40 | No - People are part of environment! |
| | 41 | No Comments - |
| | 42 | No Comments - |
| | 43 | NO - |
| | 44 | Probably - Don’t really know. |
| | 47 | No comments - |
| | 48 | No comments - |
| | 49 | No - |
| | 50 | Yes. Big Sandy has impaired waters. |
| | 51 | No Comments - |
| | 52 | I'm not qualified to make that determination. |
| | 53 | No Comments - |
| Grand Rapids | 54 | Yes, I do, it's taking our way of life away!! |
| | 55 | Somewhat - from development. Needs better zoning and improvement. |
| | 56 | Yes, water clarity and fishing |
| | 57 | No Comments - |
| | 58 | As far as Winnie no - after Bemidji put in sewer clean-up. |
| Cass | 59 | High water has caused damage to Cass Lake if Knutson dam could lower water after, less damage would have been done, and highted levels could be maintained. |
| | 60 | No Comments - |
| | 61 | No. It is my understanding the general health of the reservoirs is good. |
| | 62 | It needs desperate revamping - I am glad you're studying this - hope it's not too little to late. |
| | 63 | I have been on Cass Lake for 61 years and I think the lake is well taken care of. |
| | 64 | No- We are on Winnie, the biggest problem is water - we are at the lowest point we have ever been. We need at least 12 inches at the end of our dock. |

## August 2006 Public Meeting Comment Sheet Evaluation

| Location | | Question: |
|---|---|---|
| | | **2. Do you feel the environmental health, or conditions of the reservoirs is degrading? Why or why not** |
| | 65 | The high water (flood) a few years ago did terrfic amounts of damage to Cass Lake for that reason I support a somewhat lower level - but I still want to boat. How about a new dam at Cass? |
| | 66 | My concern relates to higher water events and erosion.I think we need to consider river environmental health. I do believe that river conditions are degraded - |
| | 67 | Yes, if you consider the river connections in the Cass Lake chain, we now have no wake, no wash rules which seem to be a cause for higher levels of silt which lowers river water levels. |
| | 68 | Not - Over a 35 year period, we've experienced high water on one occasion. During all other years, levels fluctuate within somewhat normal ranges. |
| | 69 | Yes, Weed growth and algae seem to be getting worse. How about updating Knudson dam to make it effective. |
| | 70 | No, Cass is improving per MN pd Contrd agency. |
| Cass | 71 | Yes - Highwater, 1990 - 2000, caused severe erosion and added enormous amounts of soil and sediment into Cass Lake - High Water = damage, low water is an inconvience. |
| | 72 | Not this past year - BUT, over the past 75 years, (my tenure on Cass Lake) water quality is much, much worse!! |
| | 73 | Not legible. |
| | 74 | No comments - |
| | 75 | The reservoir operations as they are currently occurring are degrading the associated downstream segments. |
| | 76 | Environmental health seems to be ok. But fish quantity and size seems to be dropping over the years. |
| | 77 | Low water is causing rotting vegetation to collect in front of our residence. |
| | 78 | No, no info to contrary |

## August 2006 Public Meeting Comment Sheet Evaluation

| Location | | Question: 3. Do you have specific issues or concerns pertaining to the operation of the reservoirs? |
|---|---|---|
| Gull | 1 | You are looking at all views this is a recreational area!!! |
| | 2 | Lake Margaret is a shallow lake already - lower level would allow more vegitation - turn the lake into a marsh. |
| | 3 | You are doing a fine job now. Need to provide more facts about the benefits that will be derived from the new proposal before any changes. |
| | 4 | Obiviously, level. However, down stream of the dam is a concern as well. On Gull, let's go with proposed plan. But start higher in spring then drop to 1194 by mid September. Level drops incremented to achieve ECO concerns. |
| | 5 | Please do not lower the lake level so early and quickly. |
| | 6 | Round Lake will be devastated if levels are lowered. Do not lower lake levels until end Oct. |
| | 7 | Concerned about higher levels in summer - lots of errosion. Concerned about higher out flows minimum. This will cause many problems I'm very concerned about changing present fall and winter operation. I am very interested in these changes and originally was part of ROPE study until it was disvanded and started to only use Corps of Eng people and no one from the public. |
| | 8 | Level of Bishops Creek is already to low most of the time - lowering the lake level in July would prevent access to Gull from Round much earlier than present. I think most people at his meeting were against lowering the lake level. However, I'm not sur our voices will be heard. |
| | 9 | You draw too much and too fast. These are recreation lakes - Economic and recreation should dominate planning - Lake levels are key - Environment is important but secondary. Request the name/address/phone of the District Engineer. The COE and it's draining policies have resulted in the rapid silting of Bishops Creek - will the COE dredge the remake Bishops Creek navigable? |
| | 10 | Yes - I have experienced substantial errosion and loss of land due to high river discharge. Contact Kenton Spading , Corps of Engineers for complete file. Please schedule leaving when residence are at bid and not gone for the winter. |
| | 11 | We need high levels for Round Lake navigation. It feels like this is being rammed down our throats. Concerns - Don't adequately consider impact on attached shallow sandy bowl lakes (Round, N lont etc.) Aquatic environment benefits philosophical |
| | 12 | Keep the lake level at the highest level possible until 3rd week in Oct. MEA weekend when people pull docks, boats, pontoons. We're always at the mercy of some colonel in St. Paul. I have little trust in gov. in general and the DNR & Corp in particular. Example 5 years ago rip rap was what the DNR said was good. Today rip rap is out and now weeds on the shore line are in. So now I've got purple loose strife which is now I'm told is bad and I'm supposed to pull that. You guys change your minds like the weather. |
| | 13 | We need to be able to keep the water level at high and of present of band. And keep trying thru fall. Start the Gull Lake water level higher in the spring, lower for environmental benefits but not below 1194 until Oct. 15th. |
| | 14 | Concern of lowering of the band. Very concerned about losing common sense. |
| | 15 | No Comments - |
| | 16 | I support red line - I've lived on Gull system since 1932. Bishop's Creek was too low for navigation in 30's and 40's etc. |
| | 17 | New plan looks good! |

## August 2006 Public Meeting Comment Sheet Evaluation

| Location | Question: | |
|---|---|---|
| | **3. Do you have specific issues or concerns pertaining to the operation of the reservoirs?** | |
| | 18 | Water Levels - 1194.20 in summer |
| | 19 | For Gull a 6" band is desirable, however the 6" floor must be a range above the existing target. Some people were allowed to be rude by talking way too much! |
| **Walker** | 20 | The Corps has always hurt every thing they touch. |
| **Walke** | | |
| | 38 | Aitkin drainage canal holds up Big Sandy discharge during flood times. Don't raise minimum at Big Sandy by 1ft. Yes! 1. That you adopt a plan that might reduce your options to respond adequately to an event. 2. That your models are wrong and you find out too late to avoid big problems. Why is the Pine Knoll issue being ignored? Presenters listened to questions but did appear to take them seriously. |
| | 39 | Wastewater treatment plant - Aitkin |
| | 40 | Corps never to be mesuring both channel Aitkin and confluence of channel & River |
| | 41 | No Comments - |
| | 42 | No Comments - |
| | 43 | No Comments - |

## August 2006 Public Meeting Comment Sheet Evaluation

| Location | | Question: 3. Do you have specific issues or concerns pertaining to the operation of the reservoirs? |
|---|---|---|
| Aitkin | 44 | Pine Knoll - (#1 above) needs to be addressed first & then reservoir operation - until this natural bottleneck is fixed, the problems are still there! |
| | 45 | Stop referring to Aitkin area as a minimum risk set. It is not just Aitkin & farmland it directly affects Cedar Lake our airport to Bay Lake. Can't stress enough the importance of Rock Ridge & Pine Knoll - was addressed on orginal plan for diversion channel but not completed due to lack of funds. |
| | 46 | No Comments - |
| | 47 | Raising flood level from 12 to 14" will be highly detramental to Aitkin County. |
| | 48 | No comments - |
| | 49 | The operation of the reservoirs is fine. |
| | 50 | I understand the ROPE study does not take into account the "Pine Knoll" problem. This problem (Pine Knoll) needs to be addressed by someone and when it is, this throws your study out of date. |
| Grand Rapids | 51 | Protection for areas of Atikin county within the flood plain areas below Pokegama Sandy |
| | 52 | Yes - flooding Aitkin |
| | 53 | No Comments - |
| | 54 | Don't take our water away, for my children, and their children. |
| | 55 | Coordination of all dam operations |
| | 56 | No Comments - |
| | 57 | No Comments - |
| | 58 | (Erosion) if fluctuations are greater |
| Cass | 59 | The Cass Lake reservoir should be held at summer levels until Sept 15th, then levels brought down to winter levels.How can three different entities work together to control water levels? Maybe all the dams should be controlled by one group, not 3 groups that don't communicate. |
| | 60 | No Comments - |
| | 61 | The upper reservoirs also have serious recreational concerns regarding lower water levels. |
| | 62 | Yes, cannot launch our boat. Many trees were sacrificed on our lake during the disastrous log and chairs "shoreline stabilization" - Still finding debris rusting chairs etc. |
| | 63 | Try and maintain the waters as even as possible. No extremes. Orderly development. |
| | 64 | I believe your proposed water levels on Winnie are too low! We have seen the levels go down and we are unable to use the water in front of our property. Because of fluctuating water we have cat tail bogs, etc flood in front of our property and take root. We have most of our dock out of water. |
| | 65 | Put in an efficient, effective dam at Knudson. |
| | 66 | Non natural cycles |
| | 67 | Yes, there should be maximum low water levels where dams can be shut down to ensure minimum levels that would be a result of this plan. |
| | 68 | Protect environment, but strongly consider maintaining useable levels (not lower) during the summer period. |
| | 69 | I am concerned that if you lower the lakes by 6" (Lake Andrusia specifically) that it will be difficult to use our dock and boat lift. It will also make river navigation more difficult. |

## August 2006 Public Meeting Comment Sheet Evaluation

| Location | | Question: |
|---|---|---|
| | | **3. Do you have specific issues or concerns pertaining to the operation of the reservoirs?** |
| | 70 | No comments - |
| | 71 | Err on the low side to restore the NORMAL balance to the lakes. Knee jerk reaction to low water - this should not cause a change to the new model. If you are suggesting to lower Cass pool from 1301.6 to 1301.1 I am in favor of the proposal. |
| | 72 | Held to high in early summer. If rains come Knutson can't release efficiently. Retire Knutson Dam build anew. Too much time given to a singe individual |
| **Cass** | 73 | Knutson Dam inadequate to control H20 level |
| | 74 | The proposed draw down of water is too soon. (early August?) Lake Bemidji and Ottertail Power have to participate in this ROPE study. There must be contingency plans for drought/surplus water years. |
| | 75 | Maintain as close to the natural flow as possible especially in the upper portion (Cass, Winni, Leech and their associated stream segments) |
| | 76 | Operations should be decided locally not from remote non involved location.Will comments from attendees actually be addressed? |
| | 77 | It is impossible to operate our boat with Cass at 1200.5 or lower. |
| | 78 | Little info to input/output water flow. |

## August 2006 Public Meeting Comment Sheet Evaluation

Question #1: Overall, I was very satisfied with this meeting.
Question #2: This meeting provided an opportunity to gain information and a better understanding of the project.
Question #3: This meeting provided an opportunity for everyone to offer comments about the project.
Question #4: Overall, attending this meeting was worth my time.

**Codes: Strongly Agree = 2; Agree = 1; Neutral = 0; Disagree = -1; Strongly Disagree = -2**

| Location | | Question # 1 | Question # 2 | Question # 3 | Question # 4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Gull** | 1 | -1 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | 4 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| | 5 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | 6 | -1 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| | 7 | -2 | 1 | -2 | 0 |
| | 8 | 0 | 1 | 1 | We'll see |
| | 9 | -1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | 10 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | 11 | -1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | 12 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| | 13 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | 14 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| | 15 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | 16 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| | 17 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| | 18 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| | 19 | 1 | 1 | 1 | |
| **Walker** | 20 | -2 | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| | 21 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | 22 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | 23 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| | 24 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | 25 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| | 26 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| | 27 | 2 & 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| | 28 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | 29 | 0 | -1 | 1 | 2 |
| | 30 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| **Walker Agency** | 31 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| | 32 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| **Gull Agency** | 33 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| | 34 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| **Aitkin** | 35 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | 36 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | 37 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| | 38 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| | 39 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 |

## August 2006 Public Meeting Comment Sheet Evaluation

Question #1: Overall, I was very satisfied with this meeting.
Question #2: This meeting provided an opportunity to gain information and a better understanding of the project.
Question #3: This meeting provided an opportunity for everyone to offer comments about the project.
Question #4: Overall, attending this meeting was worth my time.

**Codes: Strongly Agree = 2; Agree = 1; Neutral = 0; Disagree = -1; Strongly Disagree = -2**

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Aitkin** | 40 | -1 | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| | 41 | 0 | -1 | 1 | 1 |
| | 42 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | 43 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | 44 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | 45 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| | 46 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| | 47 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | 48 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| | 49 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| | 50 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | 51 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | 52 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | 53 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| **Grand Rapids** | 54 | -2 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| | 55 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| | 56 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| | 57 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | 58 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| **Cass** | 59 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | 60 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| | 61 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | 62 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| | 63 | | | | |
| | 64 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | 65 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | 66 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | 67 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| | 68 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | 69 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| | 70 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| | 71 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | 72 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | 73 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| | 74 | | | | |
| | 75 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | 76 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | 77 | -1 | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| | 78 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 |

# Public Meeting-Related Correspondence Received Up to September 14, 2006

## Clark, Steven J MVP

**From:** Clark, Steven J MVP
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 16, 2006 7:23 AM
**To:** 'jrlenz@juno.com'; cmcook@fs.fed.us
**Subject:** RE: ROPE Meetings

Starr,

Thank you for your comments. I will try to answer some of your questions as best as I can. Under the ROPE Study we are considering the option of lowering lake levels on Cass, probably no more than 6 inches, depending on support for the change. Of course, the final decision on whether or not to lower Cass Lake will be made by the Forest Service, so I feel I should defer to Chantel for further comment on this.

I wouldn't be able to guess as to whether or not extending docks would place them in deeper water. As you pointed out, it would depend on the bottom contour at individual locations.

I do believe that lower water levels would provide better opportunities for bioengineering bank stabilization and would improve the health of the lake and shoreline.

I don't know if the DNR would be more flexible on dredging rules if the lake were lowered. Your logic on this point seems accurate, however, the DNR is faced with enforcing regulations on all bodies of water and it is simpler and likely more enforceable to able the regulations equally everywhere. If lake levels were lowered on Cass, a discussion with the DNR would need to take place to clarify this issue.

I am sorry you will not be able to attend the meetings. I have enjoyed talking with you in the past. As you know, it will be difficult to convince much of the public that these kinds of changes in our operating plan are worthwhile. I hope to see a good turn-out of Cass Lake residents at our meetings so we can get a clear picture of what are acceptable changes to our operating plans.

Thank you,

Steve

*Steven J. Clark*
Project Manager/Fisheries Biologist
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, St. Paul District
190 5th Street East, Suite 401
St. Paul, MN 55101-1638 USA
Phone: (651) 290-5278
Fax: (651) 290-5258
steven.j.clark@mvp02.usace.army.mil

---

**From:** jrlenz@juno.com [mailto:jrlenz@juno.com]
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 15, 2006 3:22 PM
**To:** Clark, Steven J MVP; cmcook@fs.fed.us
**Subject:** ROPE Meetings

Mr. Steven Clark,

I am an advocate of lower water levels on Cass Lake. I will be unable to attend your meetings in August. I understand that there may be a contingency of advocates for higher levels during this period of drought. I am guessing it is for convenience and may have nothing to do with the health of the lake

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Aitkin Drainage & Conservancy District
William Cook, Chairman
41130 Great River Road
Aitkin, MN 56431
218-927-2810

August 22, 2006

Project Manager
Army Corps of Engineers
190 Fifth Street East
St. Paul, MN 55101-1638

Re: Comments for Rope Public Meeting of August 22, 2006, Aitkin, Minnesota

Dear Project Manager:

Enclosed find comments from the Aitkin Drainage & Conservancy District for the Public Meeting of the Army Corps of Engineers Reservoir Operating Plan Evaluation (ROPE).

A. Assuming that maintenance and/or construction projects were possible i.e. (1) cost-benefit ratio obtained (benefiting area expanded to include headwater lakes); (2) Funds (Federal, Local, State) secured; (3) Environmental Issues Addressed:

- What impact will the existing Aitkin Diversion Channel (cleaned out, repaired & maintained) have on this alternative operating plan?
- What impact will the existing Aitkin Diversion Channel and possible second diversion (from junction Mississippi River and Cedar Creek West to intersect Mississippi River) have on this alternative plan?
- What impact will the Pine Knoll Rock Ledge clean out have on this alternative plan?

B. As to the presently constructed Aitkin Diversion Channel, does this alternative operating plan address both the pre-channel and present channel operation?

C. How will the flowage easements previously acquired and recorded on the Headwater Lakes be affected and/or utilized in this alternative operating plan?

D. How will the existing operative rule curve (for both normal and flood conditions) be effected by this alternative operating plan?

F:\Municipal\ADCD\Project Manager Army Corps of Engineers 8-22-06

E. How will the FEMA Flood Plain & Flood Insurance issues be impacted by this alternative operating plan?

The Conservancy District would like to further discuss these issues with the Corps of Engineers in the very near future.

Sincerely,

William Cook

F:\Municipal\ADCD\Project Manager Army Corps of Engineers 8-22-06

## Clark, Steven J MVP

**From:** Chantel M Cook [cmcook@fs.fed.us]
**Sent:** Friday, August 25, 2006 2:48 PM
**To:** Clark, Steven J MVP
**Subject:** Fw: WATER LEVEL STUDIES MEETINGS! YOU MISSED

FYI. This is the note that Carol Altepeter was talking about yesterday.

---
Chantel Cook
Chippewa National Forest
phone: (218) 335-8662
e-mail: cmcook@fs.fed.us
---
----- Forwarded by Chantel M Cook/R9/USDAFS on 08/25/2006 02:47 PM -----

Melissa Rickers/R9/USDAFS
08/22/2006 09:10 AM

To: Chantel M Cook/R9/USDAFS@FSNOTES, Kay Getting/R9/USDAFS@FSNOTES
cc:
Subject: Fw: WATER LEVEL STUDIES MEETINGS! YOU MISSED

FYI - this note was sent out to call Chamber members --

----- Forwarded by Melissa Rickers/R9/USDAFS on 08/22/2006 09:09 AM -----

"Cass Lake Chamber of Commerce" <info@casslake.com>
08/22/2006 09:17 AM

To: <Undisclosed-Recipient:;>
cc:
Subject: FW: WATER LEVEL STUDIES MEETINGS! YOU MISSED

To my fellow resort owners,

Hello from Oak Haven Resort & Campground!

YOU MISSED A MEETING IN CASS LAKE THAT COULD HAVE THE LARGEST IMPACT ON YOUR BUSINESS EVER!

I hope I have your attention. The first ROPE public input meeting was tonight at Pike Bay town hall. For those that do not know what this is, Mississippi River Headwaters Reservoir Operation Plan Evaluation (ROPE).

The new proposed plan presented by the Army Corp of Engineers and the US Forestry Department will set water levels that will be LOWER than targeted levels 56% of the time, more than 20% of that time will be less than 6"
lower AND more than 10% of the time will be 12" lower! PLUS the new target water levels are about 5" to 6" lower to begin with! (This is for the water levels on Cass Lake) The effect of this on up stream lakes and the river are not even included in the study because Otter Tail Power controls the input to the Cass Lake Chain and they are not under the control of either the Forestry Department or the Corp of Engineers!

I have all the information and you are welcome to call or come and see it!

The next meeting is in Aitkin Aug 22 (tomorrow) from 1 to 3:00 pm.
Then in Grand Rapids Aug 22 at 6:30 to 8:30 pm.
Then in Walker Aug 23 at 5:00 to 8:00 pm.
and last in Brainerd Aug 24 at 5:00 to 7:30 pm.
Call me for details BUT YOU NEED TO GO! These are the only meetings they will hold until they present the final plan this winter.

LASTLY, The CURRENT plan in place will have the Chain of Lakes isolated from each other by about Labor Day unless we get major rain OR we get them (the Forestry Department and the Corp of Engineers) to enact an EMERGENCY PLAN.

Why? Because the current plan does not permit Knutson Dam to close all the gates completely! They currently are at minimum flow of 100 CFM. This would not be a problem if Otter Tail Power was letting in that much, but they are currently at minimum of 50 CFM. We are losing 50 Cubic Feet per Minute of water from our Chain with NO PLAN TO CHANGE THIS! That means that at what ever rate you have been losing water for the last 2 weeks...THAT IS WHAT YOU WILL LOSE IN THE NEXT 2 WEEKS! We, on the river between Wolf and Andrusia have lost about 4" to 5"
in the last 2 weeks. If we lose that much by Labor Day you will not be able to drive all the way between Wolf Lake and Andrusia. I do not know what the water level will be between Andrusia and Cass but my guess would be it too would not be navigatable.

WE Need to ban together and fight this! Send this to everyone you know on the lake system! GO TO ONE OF THESE MEETINGS AND GIVE THEM YOUR INPUT ON THEIR NEW AND CURRENT PLAN! I did! But I do not want to be a single voice!

Tom Shepherd
Oak Haven Resort
14333 Roosevelt Road SE
Bemidji, MN 56601
oakhaven@paulbunyan.net
www.bemidjiresort.com
www.casslakeresort.com
218 335-2092

## Clark, Steven J MVP

**From:** Clark, Steven J MVP
**Sent:** Monday, August 28, 2006 10:05 AM
**To:** 'Tom Whitehouse'
**Cc:** 'Chantel M Cook'
**Subject:** RE: Comments on ROPE

Mr. Whitehouse,

Thank you for taking the time to explain your concerns with the draft plan. The information you provided will be used to modify the draft plan, along with information that has been provided by others. As you know, there is a lot of concern with the initial proposal of lowering water levels in summer.

Thanks again for your informative comments and I encourage you to stay engaged in the study as we progress toward a new plan in the next year.

Sincerely,
Steve

*Steven J. Clark*
Project Manager/Fisheries Biologist
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, St. Paul District
190 5th Street East, Suite 401
St. Paul, MN 55101-1638 USA
Phone: (651) 290-5278
Fax: (651) 290-5258
steven.j.clark@mvp02.usace.army.mil

---

**From:** Tom Whitehouse [mailto:twhiteho@paulbunyan.net]
**Sent:** Thursday, August 24, 2006 8:32 PM
**To:** Clark, Steven J MVP
**Cc:** Mary Whitehouse
**Subject:** Comments on ROPE

Sir:

My name is Tom Whitehouse. I lease a site from the Forest Service on Pike Bay, which I am assuming will be controlled by the pool height of Cass lake.

First, let me say that it was very interesting to attend the meeting that you and the Forest Service held at Pike Bay Township this week. Your explanations and the opinions expressed by a number of the attendees were informative, and necessary to my understanding of the program. I came away with a conviction that the proposed plan could concievably be improved by modifying the proposed pool level curve somewhat.

The proposed pool level for this time of year is only about an inch from the level that we are experiencing today. The actual pool was 1300.9 at the time of the meeting, and the proposed level, assuming that I am reading the graph correctly, is 1301.0, beginning about the end of the first week in August. This level causes a couple of problems for Pike Bay residents in particular. First, it is not possible for a boat of any size larger than 12' to get through the channel to Cass with the water at this level. That would not be a problem except that there is no boat ramp that can be used to get the larger boats out of the water in Pike Bay if the level is lower than about 1301.5. That means that, if the lake level follows the graph for the proposed

plan, it would be necessary to
July. Most of the cabinners wou
starts, around Sept 1.

Secondly, a large part of the
base, my 12' aluminum boat w
from the waters edge. That is
this problem, a significant num

My suggestion is that, while
the draw down for winter begi
about Sept 1 instead of July 2

Thank you again for the opp
have responsibility for controll
of those their rulings effect. It

Thomas H. Whitehouse
Summer Resident
whitehouse@neb.rr.com
twhiteho@paulbunyan.net

## Clark, Steven J MVP

**From:** Chantel M Cook [cmcook@fs.fed.us]
**Sent:** Monday, August 28, 2006 3:23 PM
**To:** Ronald Hunter
**Cc:** Clark, Steven J MVP; Donald J Rees; Luke Rutten
**Subject:** Re: shore line

hi Ron,
Thanks for the comments. The Forest Service doesn't have any direct control over water levels on Winnie; although we do manage the dam on Cass Lake and as such, we have some influence on what comes into the lake via
the Mississippi River. The Winnie Dam is operated by the Corps, and
perhaps Steve Clark can comment on current operations at the dam, in light of the drought conditions we are experiencing throughout the Headwaters.
We are releasing the minimum flow on Cass, and are losing pool there too.
Cass Lake is currently about 7.5 inches below our summer pool target, and
still dropping. Ottertail Power, which operates the Power Dam on Lake
Bemidji / Stump Lake is only releasing 36 cubic feet per second... which is the lowest on record for this date, and that provides us with little inflow for Cass Lake. They are reporting that the inflow of Lake Bemidji is even
less than that. So unfortunately, even though we are all releasing the
minimum required to keep the Mississippi River alive, we are losing pool at
all the reservoirs. I realize that the current conditions are providing a
hardship for many boaters and resorters, but unfortunately, there isn't any water to share. We have had a severe shortage of rain which began in May.
In the Cass Lake area we have had about 0.7 inches of rain in the last month & almost nothing in June.

Thought I'd share an interesting website... the State Climatology office has a website with an interesting report on the drought conditions, and a
map of our precip (or lack thereof). Our area is one of the hardest hit
in the state, being about 8-9" below average for precip.
http://climate.umn.edu/doc/journal/drought_situation_report_2006.htm

Sorry that I can't provide any relief; at this point, we are all hoping for rain...

Chantel


---
Chantel Cook
Chippewa National Forest
phone: (218) 335-8662
e-mail: cmcook@fs.fed.us
---


Ronald Hunter
<captron1@yahoo.c
om>
08/27/2006 09:46
PM

To
cmcook@fs.fed.us
cc
Steven.J.Clark@usace.army.mil
Subject
shore line

## Clark, Steven J MVP

**From:** Clark, Steven J MVP
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 29, 2006 2:31 PM
**To:** 'Elyse Hagen'
**Cc:** 'Chantel M Cook'
**Subject:** RE: Reservoir Operating Plan
**Attachments:** GULL LAKE RESERVOIR 8-22.doc

Mr. Mills,

Thanks for your comments; we will take them into consideration when we revise the draft operating plan. We are aware that the drought is causing problems for reservoir users and this was a topic of concern at all the meetings we held last week. If you have any questions or further comments, I would be glad to hear form you.

Steve

*Steven J. Clark*
Project Manager/Fisheries Biologist
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, St. Paul District
190 5th Street East, Suite 401
St. Paul, MN 55101-1638 USA
Phone: (651) 290-5278
Fax: (651) 290-5258
steven.j.clark@mvp02.usace.army.mil

---

**From:** Elyse Hagen [mailto:ElyseH@millsfleetfarm.com]
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 22, 2006 3:26 PM
**To:** Clark, Steven J MVP
**Subject:** Reservoir Operating Plan

Jodi K

MILLS FLEET FARM

IMPORTERS AND WAREHOUSE DISTRIBUTORS

*CORPORATE HEADQUARTERS*
512 LAUREL STREET
P.O. BOX 5055
BRAINERD, MINNESOTA 56401-5055
218-829-3521

Date: 21 August 2006

To: Shannon Bauer
Mark Davidson
Steven Clark
John O'Leary

[illegible] C. M[illegible]ls, Jr.

[illegible] C[illegible]ing Plan

[illegible]ce

[illegible] for the news release and its opportunity to offer suggestions.

We appreciate the Gull River Dam and the service it provides for the Gull Lake chain.

My suggestion is not letting so much water out in the spring of the year. Let it out more gradually depending on what the Mississippi River needs later on, how much water falls and the lake level.

Our water level by the first of August got a little too low this year, but normally that doesn't happen.

Thank you,

Stewart C Mills Jr

Stewart C. Mills, Jr.

ebh

Ms Cook
I understand you might have some control over the water level here on Winnie. If the water level goes any lower I do hope some money is made availble for hard ship to resorts or cabin owners. I'm at Judd's estates here on Winnie and had to push sand just to get out of the harbor. 2 different motors got the water intakes plugged up trying to load at richard townsite. Do hope no motor damage was done. Public launch sites are a waste of time for the public to launch there boats.
All the years I have lived here this is the most ridiculous thing the corps has done. lowering the water level for what? Millions of dollars was spent protecting the shore lines from high water now for what?
Ron Hunter
63 W. Winnie Estate Dr. NE
Bena, MN 56626

Sincerely captron
captron1@yahoo.com

http://www.captainronwalleye.com

Talk is cheap. Use Yahoo! Messenger to make PC-to-Phone calls. Great rates starting at 1¢/min.

## Clark, Steven J MVP

**From:** Clark, Steven J MVP
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 30, 2006 10:39 AM
**To:** 'Betty and Jim Anderson'
**Cc:** 'Chantel M Cook'
**Subject:** RE: ROPE meeting in Aitkin

Mr. Anderson,

Thank you for your comments. As with all comments we receive, we will us them to revise our draft operating plan. I apologize for taking so long to get back to you.

You note that we are proposing to reduce the level we draw down to in the winter on Sandy (keeping water levels in the winter a foot higher). This is how it is depicted in the graph, unfortunately the graph is misleading. The graph depicts the average draw down, however, we are not proposing to change the level we can draw down to, and the draft plan differs little from how we currently operate for the final draw down target.

Reducing water levels slightly during late summer is intended to promote the diversity and abundance of aquatic vegetation and secondarily to enhance the aquatic habitat in the Mississippi River, arguably our Nation's most significant waterway. An increase in the diversity and abundance of aquatic vegetation in the reservoirs would improve and protect the future health of these systems so they can continue to provide things like abundant fish and waterfowl populations in the future. We are learning though, that an increase in aquatic vegetation may be an unacceptable tradeoff for many of the users of these reservoirs.

Also, under the draft plan we are evaluating how we might use Sandy to store water during floods. It is clear though, as mentioned during the presentation, that Sandy cannot be operated effectively to provide storage for flooding at Aitkin. It is possible that when we develop the new flood-storage curves, they will focus more on using Pokegama, Winni, and Leech to provide the needed storage, and reduce the use of Sandy for this purpose.

If you have any further comments or questions, please don't hesitate to call me – I would be happy to discuss this with you further.

Thanks,
Steve

*Steven J. Clark*
Project Manager/Fisheries Biologist
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, St. Paul District
190 5th Street East, Suite 401
St. Paul, MN 55101-1638 USA
Phone: (651) 290-5278
Fax: (651) 290-5258
steven.j.clark@mvp02.usace.army.mil

---

**From:** Betty and Jim Anderson [mailto:james_c_anderson@yahoo.com]
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 23, 2006 5:35 PM
**To:** Clark, Steven J MVP
**Subject:** ROPE meeting in Aitkin

Dear Mr Clark,

I am a lake shore owner on Big Sandy lake and have owned this property for 38 years.I have gone

through at least 6 major floods and have lost the use of my property for from one month to three months in each of these.

I was very disappointed with your draft proposal as presented.

My two main interests at Big Sandy are flood control and lake usage.

At an early meeting at the Big Sandy Dam there was a feeling among property owners present that a further late winter draw down of another foot to 1213.3 would provide a little more protection when flood years occurred. Instead of this you are proposing to reduce the draw down by almost one foot to only 1215.2. I think this is a bad idea.

Secondly, lowering the lake level in early July when most people are using the lake seems strange. Lowering the lake will only lead to increased weed growth and dock and boat lift problems.

Finally, I must again, as so many others have, raise the problem of Aitkin flooding. This is the reason why Big Sandy Floods. You hold water here until they drop below flood stage. The problem is that the six mile canal and it's chock point needs to be addressed. Until you fix this your ROPE report is worthless in my opinion.

Sincerly,

James C Anderson

---

Talk is cheap. Use Yahoo! Messenger to make PC-to-Phone calls. Great rates starting at 1¢/min.

August 23, 2006
Mr Steven J. Clark
190 Fifth Street East Suite 401
St.Paul, MN 55101-1638

Dear Mr. Clark,

Two major ecological problems have occurred on Pike Bay in the last 5 years. They were both caused by water decisions made by federal water regulators. The first occurrence was very high . ater undermining trees along the lake shore. Later landslides, 40 feet wide and from the water line to the top of banks 30 to 40 feet high began sliding down into the lake carrying 100 and 200 year old trees with it. Many birch and poplar trees at the tree line along the lakeshore were undermined and later blown over by high winds the first year or two. Water that high occurred just once over 50 years ago. We sandbagged our beach and lost only a tree. Many other homes had major problems. Three years ago, federal regulators set water levels in the winter much lower than normal at Knutson dam. The ice froze and jacked twice while the level was low. This destroyed much of our reed bed and the water channel between the reeds and shore. It has created a smelly cesspool of dead and rotting materials in front of our cabin. It has required almost 1,000 hours of hard clean up work over the last 3 years, and there is no end in sight. Nothing like this had ever happened to the reed beds in the previous 70 years my wife has been living here. Enclosed is a letter describing in detail the ugly mess we must deal with every day.

Sincerely,

Gene P. Gordon
1160 Arrowhead Dr
Dubuque, IA 52003

Cc; John L. Murray
30464 Star Island SE
Cass Lake, MN 56633

Mr. Steve Clark,
National Forest

We would like to
Lake. Your repo
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general public

The purpose of
cabin owners on
meeting.

The only way fo
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John L Murray, President, Star Island Protective League

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So, thank yo

"Kevin Zahler"
<KZAHLER@MN.RR.CO
M>

08/22/2006 09:04
PM

To
<Bluhm@usace.army.mil>,
<Clark@usace.army.mil>,
<Oleary@usace.army.mil>,
<cmcook@fs.fed.us>

cc

Subject
ROPE

Hello,

I recently learned about ROPE and would like to volunteer my time if I can be of assistance. Unfortunately I cannot attend the meetings this week but would like to learn as much as possible. I have read through your web site and have a rough understanding of the purpose of ROPE but unfortunately very rough.

I have a home on Rush Lake in the Whitefish Reservoir and recently purchased property on Zebulon Pike Lake (Blanchard Dam Reservoir). I think the Blanchard Dam is not part of your work but it is in the correct area.

Anyway, any information you can pass on or if I can assist in any way please let me know.

Best regards,
Kevin Zahler
612-618-9817

## Clark, Steven J MVP

**From:** George Allan [gjallan@comcast.net]
**Sent:** Friday, September 01, 2006 11:58 AM
**To:** Clark, Steven J MVP
**Subject:** comments on ROPE

At the recent meeting you held in Pike Bay Township about a new policy proposal regarding lake level standards, you invited responses. I would like to take advantage of that invitation. I'm a summer resident on Pike Bay, leasing my site from the Forest Service since 1969.

I have no problem with the general plan of "pool levels" in Cass Lake (which levels directly determine those in Pike Bay). My concern is with the timing of the winter draw down, which I understand is proposed to begin about July 20 and reach 1301.0 feet in early August. That level, which happens to be where the lake is right now, is so low that: [a] I can no longer get my boat (a 16' runabout) off or on to a boat lift located at the end of my 60' dock, [b] I can no longer get through the channel to Cass Lake, and [c] it was very difficult removing the boat from the water at the only boat ramp on Pike Bay (whew! I did manage it!
but this was two weeks before I wanted to remove it). In other words, when the lake level is down to around 1301 feet, I cannot use my boat any more.

Cabin owners on the east side of Pike Bay are seriously hurt by low lake levels because our shoreline is fairly flat quite a way out. If the water level is too shallow at about 40' from shore, it will be only marginally less shallow at 100' (the bottom actually undulates for about this distance, varying maybe a foot up and down until it finally begins to fall away). Historically, levels in Pike Bay have been maybe a foot higher, I believe, at 1302 or more. My dock now runs about 15' before it reaches the shoreline rather than, as it once did, starting at the shoreline.

I would hate to lose August as a vacation month. More generally, people dependent on tourism, such as the Ojibway Resort owner further down our beach, will be not merely inconvenienced but seriously harmed by the loss of customers in August — which has already happened this season, unfortunately. I recommend that the Cass Lake level be kept high (except where drought conditions prevent it, of course), preferably around 1302, until Labor Day, which is the traditional end of the summer tourist season.

Thank you for giving me this opportunity to express, and explain, my concerns. I hope you find my suggested postponement of the date for winter draw down reasonable.

--George Allan

--
George Allan
gjallan@comcast.net

permanent:
63 Creek Bank Drive, Mechanicsburg PA 17050-1814 tel:+1 717-791-9941 summer 2006: June 2 through September 7:
14715 Takagami Loop NW, Cass Lake MN 56633-2034 tel: +1 218-335-2091

## Clark, Steven J MVP

**From:** Clark, Steven J MVP
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 05, 2006 2:28 PM
**To:** 'cathyt@uslink.net'
**Cc:** Davidson, Mark D MVP; Struss, Gregg A MVP
**Subject:** RE: ROPE
**Attachments:** Synopsis Gull Lake.doc

Cathy – I have attached a summary of the meeting as requested. I put it together rather quickly and would be happy to provide you with a revision if it is not quite what you are looking for. Also, I would appreciate it if you would send a copy of the newsletter when you it is finished. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to call.

Thanks,
Steve

*Steven J. Clark*
Project Manager/Fisheries Biologist
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, St. Paul District
190 5th Street East, Suite 401
St. Paul, MN 55101-1638 USA
Phone: (651) 290-5278
Fax: (651) 290-5258
steven.j.clark@mvp02.usace.army.mil

---

**From:** Struss, Gregg A MVP
**Sent:** Friday, September 01, 2006 12:38 PM
**To:** Clark, Steven J MVP; Davidson, Mark D MVP
**Subject:** FW: ROPE

Hi,

Could some one please put something together for the Gull Chain of Lakes Association Newsletter, it would be greatly appreciated.

Thanks, Gregg

p.s. Just email Cathy Taylor with the article.

---

**From:** Cathy Taylor [mailto:cathyt@uslink.net]
**Sent:** Thursday, August 31, 2006 2:14 PM
**To:** Struss, Gregg A MVP
**Subject:** ROPE

Is there any way you could get me a synopsis of the ROPE study meeting you had last week so I could put it in the newsletter?

Cathy T

eadwater i
ike on whe
decrease
hey stopp

## Clark, Steven J MVP

**From:** Chantel M Cook [cmcook@fs.fed.us]
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 06, 2006 3:34 PM
**To:** Chantel M Cook
**Cc:** Donald J Rees; Kay Getting; Luke Rutten; Clark, Steven J MVP
**Subject:** Re:

Daniel LeClaire..... not Hernandez...


---
Chantel Cook
Chippewa National Forest
phone: (218) 335-8662
e-mail: cmcook@fs.fed.us
---


Chantel M Cook/R9/USDAFS

09/06/2006 02:32 PM

To: Luke Rutten/R9/USDAFS, Donald J Rees/R9/USDAFS, Kay Getting/R9/USDAFS

cc: Steven.J.Clark@mvp02.usace.army.mil

Subject:

Daniel _____ (Hernandez?) just stopped by from the Cass Lake Times. He had been over to Leech Lake DRM talking to John Ringle about water levels.
John mentioned ROPE & told him to stop by & see me. I explained that I could answer some questions about ROPE, but if he wanted to talk current water levels, he should talk with Luke J.
We talked briefly about the ROPE study & the dry conditions. Luke, I gave him your drought map & the website. Gave him a ROPE newsletter. I hope he calls you. He had heard from the locals that Ottertail was releasing 50 cfs & we were releasing 100. John Ringle filled him in on other sources of water for Cass (Turtle, Kitchi, groundwater, etc.) and the effects of the dry season. John explained why we could not just shut the dam completely.
Daniel was not really familiar with the ROPE study, and we did not discuss the public meetings or proposed plan. He is mainly interested in the low water levels, stemming from the Chamber letter, the recent Corps news release about low water levels, and the rumblings in the community. I hope I didn't say anything stupid that ends up in the newspaper. If I did, my apologies in advance.

I'm wondering if the Cass Lake Times ever received a copy of the news release announcing the August public meetings. In the letter I received from the Chamber, Michelle says that "the last meeting was not advertised".
Steve, can you check for sure whether or not the Cass Lake Times is on your mailing list?
Anyone from the Cass Lake Mayor's office or City Council?

cheers.
Chantel

**Clark, Steven J MVP**

**From:** Snyder, Aaron M MVP
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 12, 2006 4:24 PM
**To:** Clark, Steven J MVP
**Subject:** FW: Attention: Steve Clark, ROPE Project Manager (651-290-5278)

Steve - FYI

Aaron M. Snyder
USACE Community Planner
651-290-5489
Aaron.M.Snyder@usace.army.mil

**From:** John Forney [mailto:john.forney@fallon.com]
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 12, 2006 2:04 PM
**To:** DLL-CEMVP PM Rope
**Cc:** John Larsen; Jack Wallschlaeger; Pat Tweed; John Forney
**Subject:** Attention: Steve Clark, ROPE Project Manager (651-290-5278)

Please forward to Steve Clark

RE: ROPE – Crosslake Dam and Whitefish Chain/Reservoir

Steve Clark
ROPE Project Manager
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Dear Steve:

Thank you for your call yesterday regarding a meeting tentatively scheduled for 8:00AM, Wednesday, September 20 at a site to still to be determined. As I mentioned in our phone conversation, the Whitefish Area Property Owners Association (WAPOA) welcomes the opportunity to meet with you to discuss the ROPE Project and its impact on the Whitefish Chain of Lakes.

This letter is an adaptation of a letter to you that I had started last week following the public information meetings conducted by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the U.S. Forestry Service at Walker and Baxter, Minnesota at the end of August, 2006. As background, WAPOA has 1045 members and is active as stewards of the 14 Whitefish Chain lakes plus another 13 lakes in the area.

WAPOA had representatives at the meetings in Walker and at Gull Lake. After the meetings, we called a special Board meeting to review the proposal and identify questions and begin to frame formal comments. The meeting was attended by 22 people including directors of WAPOA, representatives from the University of Minnesota Extension Service and the Crow Wing County Soil & Water District, two representatives of the Rush Lake Association as

well as ten other interested property owners. In addition, we contacted representatives of the Minnesota DNR (fisheries and non-game wildlife), and Whitefish Area Lodging Association. We also spent time with Ray Nelson at the Cross Lake Dam learning how the dam is currently being operated. The group spent two and a half hours discussing each aspect of the preliminary proposal as well as identifying issues that impact the Whitefish/Cross Reservoir.

To begin, we cannot over-emphasize the fact that our membership is extremely pleased with the present operations of the dam and the reservoir. As a group whose mission is to be stewards of the lake and the environment, we cannot identify any areas that a change in operating guidelines as presented would improve. To the contrary, we believe that changes would be detrimental.

Following are the questions that were raised which I told you I would forward in advance of our meeting. Our primary question is what are the specific objectives of the proposed changes for the Cross Lake Dam/Whitefish Reservoir? The stated objectives in the presentation are very general and may not be measurable – before or after the proposed changes. Additionally, since each reservoir is unique, the objectives need to be specific and measurable for each reservoir.

Other questions include:
Impact of higher water levels on the erosion of the sugar sand cliffs and shore banks? Impact on boat navigation of channels between lakes on the chain and navigation under bridges?
Impact of erosion and sedimentation on natural spawning areas for fish?
Impact that reduced fall drawdown would have regarding ice damage to shoreline and property (Drawdown needs to be more in keeping with current target prior to ice over in December.)?

Impact of greater variation of water levels on nesting birds such as loons?

Impact of erosion on nutrient levels on a lakes system which already has an extremely high phosphorus levels?

Impact on potable wells and septic systems?
Increasing probability of flooding down stream due to decreased holding capacity in the event of record precipitation combine with increased impervious surface runoff due to development?
Impact of increased water discharge levels and the earlier commencement of drawdown on navigation and the recreation industry in dry periods?

You indicated on the phone that you likely would not have more information for this meeting than was presented at the public meetings. I understand that but hopefully the questions above can be addressed going forward. I am arranging to get us out on the lakes as part of your visit so you can familiarize yourself with conditions on the Chain. Please contact me by phone at 218-692-3422 or via email at . when you have determined where we will

meet (If the meeting room at the Cross Lake Dam is not available, let me know and I will find facilities.) I look forward to meeting with you.

Sincerely,

John Forney
President, WAPOA

**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY**
**ST. PAUL DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS**
**SIBLEY SQUARE AT MEARS PARK**
**190 FIFTH STREET EAST, SUITE 401**
**ST. PAUL MN 55101-1638**

September 12, 2006

Planning, Programs and Project Management Division
Project Management Branch

Ms. Michelle McCarthy
Office Manager
Cass Lake Chamber of Commerce
6242 Upper Cass Frontage Road
P.O. Box 548
Cass Lake, Minnesota 56633

Dear Ms. McCarthy:

Thank you for your comments regarding water levels on Cass Lake. As I am sure you are aware, the drought is having a negative effect on water levels in all the lakes in central and northern Minnesota. Very little can be done to increase or even hold lake levels stable under the drought conditions we are experiencing.

The Reservoir Operating Plan Evaluation, or ROPE study, is being used to evaluate current Mississippi River Headwaters reservoir operations. The U.S. Forest Service is a cooperating agency in that study, and Ottertail Power is also participating. Therefore, the operations of Knutson Dam on Cass Lake and Stump Lake Dam on Lake Bemidji are being evaluated for potential changes. Two of the study's goals are to improve communication between dam operators and to develop a system-wide approach to operations. However, the Forest Service and Ottertail Power will make their decisions for changes in operation independently; the Corps of Engineers does not have jurisdiction over their dams.

I encourage you to stay involved in the ROPE study process and to call me if you have any further concerns or questions. I can be reached at (651) 290-5278 or by email at steven.j.clark@usace.army.mil .

Sincerely,

Steven J. Clark
Project Manager

Copy furnished:
OP-RNH/John O'Leary
Ms. Chantel Cook
U.S. Forest Service

Cass Lake Chamber of Commerce
6242 Upper Cass Frontage Rd
P.O. Box 548
Cass Lake, MN 56633
218-335-2250 800-356-8615
Fax: 218-335-2255
info@casslake.com www.casslake.com

September 5, 2006

Colonel Pfenning
District Engineer
St. Paul District
Corps of Engineers
ATTN: Mr. Steve Clark
Project Management Branch
190 5th Street E.
St. Paul, MN 55101-1638

Dear Mr. Clark,

The Cass Lake Chamber of Commerce has recently been informed of the proposed plan to lower the water level on Cass Lake. Due to the drought that has struck our area this summer, the water levels are already dangerously low. Navigation between Cass Lake and Lake Andrusia is almost impossible and you are no longer able to get between Lake Andrusia and Big Wolf Lake.

Ideally, the dam that Otter Tail Power operates and the Knutson dam should be run in cooperation with each other. If Cass Lake is low, then Knutson should not let out any more water than it is getting in. The dam operators need to understand how this is affecting our area and what the damage will be if Cass Lake continually has low water.

It is understandable that water is needed down river, but why should Lake Bemidji be allowed to have a higher water level than the Cass Lake Chain? There are two major muskie tournaments coming to our area this month and the fishermen are going to have a hard time getting out of the resort's harbors and using their docks due to the low water.

Tourism is our area's main source of income. Without the water and the ability to promote the "Chain of Lakes", our community will suffer and revenue will be lost. Please take this into consideration and modify your operating plan to reflect our concerns.

Sincerely,

Michelle McCarthy
Office Manager
Cass Lake Chamber of Commerce

Cc: John O'Leary, Headwaters' operations manager
Chantel Cook, US Forest Service
Frank Moe, District 4A Representative
Carrie Ruud, District 4 Senator

## Clark, Steven J MVP

**From:** Clark, Steven J MVP
**Sent:** Thursday, September 14, 2006 7:54 AM
**To:** 'JUDY&DENNIS HERBST'
**Cc:** Kormanik, Jodell L MVP; Chantel M Cook
**Subject:** RE: Big Sandy Lake, Aitkin County, Minnesota

Judy,

Thanks for your question and the opportunity to provide some answers. We have been receiving similar questions and comments from people at all of our reservoirs this summer.

Unfortunately, there is very little we can do to hold water levels up in Big Sandy. This is of course due to the drought we are experiencing. We have only been releasing our minimum flow since around the first of June. We have minimum flow requirements at all of our dams to prevent fish kills and other damages in the downstream rivers. Also, if we were to shut the dam off to zero at Big Sandy for a couple weeks, the lake would continue to fall because of evaporation, just at a slower rate. The minimum release on Big Sandy (20 cubic feet per second) in August only lowered the lake about an additional 1.5 inches, but evaporation alone lowered it by about 5 inches.

Unfortunately at this time, about the only thing we can do is hope for rain.

If you have any other comments or questions, please give me a call.

Sincerely,
Steve

*Steven J. Clark*
Project Manager/Fisheries Biologist
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, St. Paul District
190 5th Street East, Suite 401
St. Paul, MN 55101-1638 USA
Phone: (651) 290-5278
Fax: (651) 290-5258
steven.j.clark@mvp02.usace.army.mil

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**From:** JUDY&DENNIS HERBST [mailto:jdherbst@msn.com]
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 13, 2006 3:26 PM
**To:** Clark, Steven J MVP
**Subject:** Big Sandy Lake, Aitkin County, Minnesota

The lake level is really really low on Big Sandy Lake in Aitkin County, Minnesota. Is there a reason other than weather conditions. So many people can't get their boats off of their boat lifts because of the low water level. Is there a way that the Libby Dam could be closed for a few weeks????

I would really appreciate any information you can give me. Thank you.

Judy Herbst
Big Sandy Lake property owner
jdherbst@msn.com

## Clark, Steven J MVP

**From:** Clark, Steven J MVP
**Sent:** Thursday, September 14, 2006 8:42 AM
**To:** 'Jean Kelley'
**Cc:** 'Chantel M Cook'; Luke Rutten
**Subject:** RE: ROPE and draw down on Pike Bay,Cass Lake,MN

Ms. Kelley,

Thank you for your thoughtful comments. I assume you, we will take them into consideration when revising our draft operating plan. We have also received similar comments from others on Cass Lake. As you know the drought is causing problems this year that are beyond the control of the Corps of Engineers or the Forest Service. Since Cass Lake is Operated by the Forest Service, I am forwarding your message to Chantel Cook and Luke Rutten to allow them to respond to your comments as well.

Again, thank you for taking to the time inform us about your concerns – this is how we can best learn about the needs of the public. If you have any other questions or concerns, please let me know.

Sincerely,
Steve

*Steven J. Clark*
Project Manager/Fisheries Biologist
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, St. Paul District
190 5th Street East, Suite 401
St. Paul, MN 55101-1638 USA
Phone: (651) 290-5278
Fax: (651) 290-5258
steven.j.clark@mvp02.usace.army.mil

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**From:** Jean Kelley [mailto:keema2347@yahoo.com]
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 13, 2006 1:00 PM
**To:** Clark, Steven J MVP
**Subject:** Re: ROPE and draw down on Pike Bay,Cass Lake,MN

Dear Mr. Clark,
I am very concerned with the proposed draw down of Pike Bay for next year to begin in July and reach 1301.0 feet by August. I own a summer cabin on the east shore of Pike Bay. Our family has had the cabin since 1930. Leasing the lot from the Chippewa National Forest. I don't remember Pike Bay ever being this low. It has been an awful summer and fall for any activity on the lake with our boat since early August. We had to literally dig down the boat lift to then pry the boat off the lift to get it into the water on Aug. 12. It was terrible. Then we moved the boat lift out another 30 feet and the dock as well and it probably only gained us about another inch of water or so. Ken at the Ojibwe Resort had to extend his dock almost 150 feet to get any water for his guests to bring their boats, and lost some people because they couldn't get their boats in.July and August are prime summer recreation times on the lake and to draw down the lake level that early really puts a kabash on the activity. Many people on Pike Bay just took their boats completely off the lake and took in their docks in the middle of August because the water was so low. We had to take a vehicle out into the lake and winch the boat off the lift over

Labor Day. Then just gave up all together on having a boat on the lake. I was just up there and couldn't even launch the kayak from shore, the water is so low. I had to scooch it out over the sand and water at least 30 feet before I could even float and paddle.

I have no problem with a low pool level for fall....but please wait until fall.....at least until after Labor Day and maybe think of drawing it down in October. It may not need to be drawn down as low as you think. We haven't had a good snow year or a rainey fall for quite some time. And with global warming we seem to have less and less water. So if you are worrying about flooding in the spring I think it is a wasted worry. True we did have high water a few years ago but it has been a while. I do understand that you have to have a trickle of moving water between Cass and Winnie to keep the river running.Have you ever paddled between Cass and Winnie ? There aren't many areas that are at risk of just growing shut. Course it has been a while since I have been paddling that stretch perhaps things have changed.

The tourists do add a lot to the economy of the Cass/Bemidji area and it would be ashame to lose any of them. The lake is one reason we all come up north. Being so low it is very frustrating to all of us who boat and fish on the lake. It is even difficult to launch the canoe these days as it has to be dragged out who knows how far. And to swim you have to wade out at least 100 feet before you come to a couple feet of water.

So you see I am very upset about the low water level. I do realize that we had the unusually hot and dry year but last year it was shallow as well.

Thank you for this opportunity to voice my opinion on the water level and proposed draw down on Pike Bay ( Cass Lake ). Nobody has ever let us have any input. I am sorry I was not able to attend the meeting you had in Pike Bay Township. I am still working . Work 6 days on and 8 days off. Of course the days off I am " up at the lake " resting and relaxing and trying to enjoy it.

I hope that you take into consideration the responses you are getting to your proposal.

I live in Coon Rapids and hiked along the Mississippi River today. North of Coon Rapids Dam it is very full as full as it can get.....I was saddened that our part of the river wasn't that high.

Thank you for letting me comment.

Sincerely,

Jean E. Kelley/Summer Resident on Pike Bay in Cass Lake,MN

---

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## Clark, Steven J MVP

**From:** Clark, Steven J MVP
**Sent:** Thursday, September 14, 2006 11:20 AM
**To:** 'Kurt Martin'
**Cc:** O'Leary, John F MVP; cmcook@fs.fed.us; Bluhm, Kevin W MVP
**Subject:** RE: ROPE Project: Gull Reservoir

Mr. Martin,

Thanks for your comments. I believe you have captured the consensus of the group that attended the meeting. We will use these comments when revising the draft operating plan. Of course, a revised plan based on these ideas will likely need further modification when evaluations are completed, because as you point out below, there are concerns for impacts to other factors such as erosion.

There would be some concern regarding erosion and higher spring water levels. This will be considered when revising the plan. As far as higher spring water levels in Sugar Bush Creek floating decaying vegetation and silt into Round Lake is concerned, I doubt there would be a measurable effect within the limits of the small increases in water level we are considering. Of course I cannot state that with certainty, but it also seems just as likely that more natural water level fluctuations would on average improve shallow vegetation beds, which tend to stabilize bottom sediments. I think you would agree that it would take drastic water level fluctuations to mobilize as much sediment and vegetation as blasting with dynamite would.

I may be interested in making a presentation at your December meeting. By then, we will have modified the draft operating plans and it may be a good opportunity for some feedback. If I decide I am brave enough to attend, it may be best to schedule the presentation early in the meeting before people have had much time to imbibe "courage" – even a glutton has limits. :-)

I think when we have revised the operating plans, we will release a newsletter focusing on them to keep people informed and to request additional feedback. If you have received our newsletter in the past, you will continue to receive them. If you haven't, just let me know and we can add your email address to the list.

Again, thanks for your comments and let me know if you have any other questions or concerns.

Steve

*Steven J. Clark*
Project Manager/Fisheries Biologist
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, St. Paul District
190 5th Street East, Suite 401
St. Paul, MN 55101-1638 USA
Phone: (651) 290-5278
Fax: (651) 290-5258
steven.j.clark@mvp02.usace.army.mil

---

**From:** Kurt Martin [mailto:martincom@infotelcom.net]
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 12, 2006 12:06 PM
**To:** Clark, Steven J MVP
**Cc:** O'Leary, John F MVP; cmcook@fs.fed.us; Bluhm, Kevin W MVP
**Subject:** ROPE Project: Gull Reservoir

Dear Mr. Clark:

Thank you for your presentation at the Gull Dam last month. I would like to especially thank you for your patience, understanding, and taking the time to address all the questions & issues with sincere answers--even those that were beyond the scope of the meeting.

I was very satisfied with the consensus we had achieved at the end of the meeting. To recap, my understanding is that our goal is to have a water surface at a target level of 1194.0' at mid-September. We would then work backward from that point, increasing the dam level water levels throughout the summer back to spring, to achieve the ecological goals as well as provide capacity for the increased discharge volume of 50 cfs.

I've had some after thoughts in the days that followed the meeting that produced some concerns. As our discussions during the meeting yielded a somewhat evolving, conceptual plan; we didn't have any hard numbers of water level projections, other than where it was desired to be at in mid-September. As such, this is where my concerns arise from. First, if we end up at significantly higher surface level in the spring after shore bank soil thaws, would we have an erosion issue?

The other issue I'm concerned about is a bit more complicated. It involves Sugar Bush Creek that connects North Long Lake to Round Lake. This creek flows through marsh lands and beaver dam areas. Apparently, there is some history involving this creek and efforts to improve flow from North Long into Round and/or drain marsh lands. From what I have heard third hand and cannot testify to the accuracy, at one point Beaver dams were blasted from the creek as well as shallow areas, to improve flow. As an unforeseen side effect, this loosened a large amount of silt, sediment & decayed vegetation which were carried into Round and settled in the north bay of the lake, producing a bottom coating of silt an inch or two in depth.

As such, this brings us to the next point of concern, as we increase the surface level we also increase the water surface area of Sugar Bush Creek into the marsh lands bordering it. My specific concern is dependent on what that level may actually be and the possibility of "floating" decaying vegetation, silt & other less desirable manner from the marsh lands into Round Lake.

I'm also a board member of the Round Lake Improvement Association. I've been charged with preparing an article for our winter newsletter in regards to ROPE. If what I hadn't previously recapped isn't correct or the direction that Corp is currently projecting as the proposed operating plan, please correct me. Also, if you would like to convey a brief synopsis of the status of ROPE as it pertains to the Gull Reservoir, to be printed in our newsletter, that is something we would like to accommodate. Of course, if you're really a glutton for punishment, we'd love to have you make a presentation and be a guest at our annual Christmas Party/Winter Meeting in December. It is a more a social gathering than a meeting----a good excuse to treat your wife/girl friend to an evening out.

Perhaps as you modifying your proposed operating plan, would it be possible to email the corresponding hydrographs to me?

Again, thank you for your efforts.

Kurt Martin
Martin Communications Inc
109 Second Avenue NE
Brainerd MN 56401

PH: 218-829-6007
Fax:218-829-1574
E-mail:martincom@infotelcom.net

# Correspondence

# MISSISSIPPI HEADWATERS BOARD

CASS COUNTY COURTHOUSE • P.O. BOX 3000 • WALKER, MINNESOTA 56484

PHONE 218-547-7263
FAX 218-547-7376

E MAIL 0999mhb@InforMNs.k12.mn.us
HOME PAGE http://www.mhbriverwatch.dst.mn.us


May 11, 1998

Lieutenant Colonel William J. Breyfogle
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers St. Paul District
190 East Fifth Street #1638
St. Paul , MN 55101-1638

Dear Lieutenant Colonel Breyfogle:

Owners of all dams on the Mississippi River's First 400 miles respectfully request that the Corps of Engineers (COE) review operations of the Headwaters reservoirs to determine if maximum benefits of operations of the system are being achieved. Specifically, we request that:

1. The COE evaluate the effects of the current reservoir operations on people and nature;

2. Evaluate the benefits of the current reservoir operations;

3. Define what the benefits of operating the reservoir should be, and

4. Revise, if necessary, the operating curve for the Headwaters reservoir system.

We request that this study proceed as quickly as possible and that the Corps work with the Mississippi Headwaters Board and the organizations listed below on achieving his study. Also enclosed are resolutions from the eight member counties of the Mississippi Headwaters Board supporting this effort.

The Mississippi Headwaters Board has voted to contribute to this effort by coordinating the necessary public information meetings in the Headwaters region beginning in June,1998 or whenever they are appropriate..

Sincerely,

Jane E. Van Hunnik

Jane E. Van Hunnik, MS
Director

Enclosure


RECEIVED
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

MAY 15 1998

EXECUTIVE OFFICE
ST. PAUL DISTRICT

# MISSISSIPPI HEADWATERS BOARD

CASS COUNTY COURTHOUSE • P.O. BOX 3000 • WALKER, MINNESOTA 56484

PHONE 218-547-7263
FAX 218-547-7376

E MAIL 0999mhb@InforMNs.k12.mn.us
HOME PAGE http://www.mhbriverwatch.dst.mn.us


April 9, 1999

The Honorable James L. Oberstar
2366 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C.20515

RE: Upper Mississippi River, Watershed Management Planning, Lake Itasca to Lock and Dam #2

Dear Representative Oberstar:

As you may recall from MHB newsletters and calls to your office, the Mississippi Headwater Board (MHB) and Army Corps of Engineers (ACE) held four scoping meetings with citizens and other local water planning agencies to determine the need to revise the formulas by which the reservoirs are currently managed. The method of management was determined by economics and other factors that existed in the 1930's. The MHB office has had many complaints about the management of the reservoir water levels and the need for revision has been suggested numerous times by citizens over the years.

Th result of the meetings is that MHB respectfully requests that you contact the Chairman of the Subcomittee on Energy and Water Development (Congressman Packard) to ask that a Watershed management federal investigation reconnaissance study be initiated in FY 2000 by the ACE at a cost of $100,000.

The primary focus of this project would be to study:

1. The impacts of water levels
2. Water quality problems
3. Water supply issues
4. Baseline water quality data models made available to the public through education.
5. New watershed modeling information
6. And provide personal computer based decision-making tools.

We are presently in a unique position to make some positive changes for the following reasons:

1. A cooperative agreement exits between dam holders (Ottertail Power, Minnesota Power, the Chippewa National Forest, Potlatch, and DNR.
2. MPCA is in the process of conducting basin planning for the upper Mississippi River basin.
3. Technology has drastically increased since the 1930's making possible a viable model showing consequences of actions before they are taken.
4. The publication of the Rossman Water Book by MHB and funded by the Blandin Foundation ($60,000) will level the playing field for lay persons to ask intelligent questions of the professionals in the agencies, thus holding us accountable.

5. The high degree of citizen participation expected will facilitate acceptance of the decision making process.
6. The integrated inter-agency approach will prevent duplication of activities between agencies, providing more efficient use of tax dollars, better decision making and consequently a better product

I am enclosing a fact sheet for your perusal. If you have questions or concerns please feel to contact me, Ed McNally, project Manager (ACE) at (651) 290-5307, or Jim Hodgeson, Basin Planner (MPCA) at (218) 828-2492. Thank you for your assistance in this matter. You are held in very high esteem here and I know you will be our advocate.

In Public Service,

Jane E. Van Hunnik, MS
Director

Enclosure

Cc: Jim Ruyak
Ed McNally
Jim Hodgeson
County Water Planners
Dam holders

JHV

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER
500 Lafayette Road
St. Paul, Minnesota 55155-4037

January 18, 2001

Colonel Kenneth Kasprisin, District Engineer
St. Paul District Corps of Engineers
Army Corps of Engineers Center
190 Fifth Street East
St. Paul, MN 55101

RE: Letter of Support for the Upper Mississippi River Reconnaissance Study and Potential Feasibility Studies

Dear Colonel Kasprisin:

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) offers strong support for the Proposed Upper Mississippi River Reconnaissance Study and Potential Feasibility Studies. The St. Paul District Corps of Engineers (COE) is uniquely positioned to accomplish the identified objectives in cooperation with a variety of partners, including the Mississippi River Headwaters Board, the Metropolitan Council, resource conservation and development councils, and the cities of St. Paul, Minneapolis, and St. Cloud (consistent with the specific Federal study authority provided by the April 15, 1999, resolution of the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure).

The DNR at this time does not know whether we will serve as the official non-Federal Sponsor for any Feasibility Studies that come forward. However, we think there is some value in identifying areas of DNR interest that could coincide with Reconnaissance Study objectives recognizing that each area will have to be explored more deeply in later discussions. Specifically:

1. We support the decision of the Metropolitan Council to serve as the non-federal sponsor for preparation of the Surface Water Use Management Plan. Development of the Surface Water Use Management Plan was recommended by the Comprehensive Management Plan for the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area, which was completed in 1974. That plan recommended the Corps of Engineers play a lead role in developing the Surface Water Use Management Plan, so it is appropriate the plan be prepared as part of the feasibility studies under Corps leadership. Completion of the plan will further implement Public Law 100-696.

   The DNR is committed to full participation in preparation of the Surface Water Use Management Plan. In terms of our own activities, it is possible that Feasibility Study

DNR INFORMATION: 651-296-6157, 1-888-646-6367 (TTY: 651-296-5484, 1-800-657-3929) FAX: 651-296-4799



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objectives coincide with the goals of our Boat and Water Safety Program, which includes surface water use consultation with local units of government.

2. Opportunities may be present for DNR participation in the "Optimizing Regulation of the Mississippi River Headwaters Reservoirs" Feasibility Study. Potential points of interest include:

   - The Leech Lake Watershed Association is supported by DNR (through the provision of supporting staff to this organization). Association goals may coincide with study objectives.

   - Water level management for the benefit of native aquatic vegetation, (i.e., wild rice production).

   - Cooperation in the control of exotic fish species, (i.e., winter drawdowns of lakes).

   - Studying the feasibility of manipulating the pool water elevations to mimic natural fluctuations in order to improve fish and wildlife habitat.

   Further on this topic, there is value in having the COE-controlled reservoir system modeled regardless of whether a Feasibility Study does indeed come forward.

3. The proposed "Watershed Modeling" Feasibility Study is of interest, not only for watersheds, which is ongoing, but also for future lakeshed modeling.

   This Feasibility Study could also include digitizing (very) old COE Maps of the Mississippi River and Valley that include vegetation types and communities, as well as topography. These maps were published in approximately 1895 and 1877.

4. The "Water Supply Protection" Feasibility Study's focus would most interest the affected communities. However, the early detection and warning of spills, as they relate to potential environmental damage, is an area of natural resource interest. If this were to become part of the feasibility study scope, DNR may become more active in the study than now anticipated.

5. The "River Corridor Restoration (Metro Reach)" Feasibility Study likely offers areas of mutual interest. DNR's interest could be heightened through inclusion of these issues into the scope of investigation:

- Addition of the remediation of the Pigs Eye Landfill site to the focus areas could engender serious interest by DNR. Opportunities may be present to provide staff time and project funding (i.e., for contaminant analysis) as part of a study to better define the extent of the project and to help select between various remediation options.

- Some of the focus areas could be consistent with ongoing programs, such as Metro Greenways.

- A potential area of interest involves land uses within the MNRRA and Critical Area.

- A potential area of study involves zebra mussels; why are they not flourishing in the Metro reach of the Mississippi River?

- It is of interest to note that DNR's Division of Fisheries conducts an extensive lake and stream survey program that includes a great deal of sampling in the upper Mississippi River basin. For example, the fish sampling done along the Metro reach of the Mississippi River provides relevant water quality information because some fish species are good indicators of water quality changes. However, DNR does very little water quality monitoring *per se* in the Mississippi River.

  We are open to future discussions as to whether our routine fish sampling on the river could be considered a legitimate in-kind match for the feasibility study on the river corridor restoration for the Metro reach, which has a water quality study component. Depending upon the interpretation of what constitutes legitimate in-kind contributions, DNR may be able to contribute a significant dollar amount to the various feasibility studies or not much at all from this sampling activity. If it is determined that indeed the ongoing survey work could qualify as an in-kind contribution, there is flexibility present in our survey schedule to accommodate one or more feasibility studies. It must be acknowledged however that we cannot change the emphasis or our sampling from fish to other water quality parameters, such as sediment loading data collection.

We believe this process has the potential to identify and eventually implement a variety of Upper Mississippi River watershed-related projects. These projects would serve the public interest and would likely muster the support of a variety of stakeholders, including the State of Minnesota, local governmental units, and Indian and regional resource agencies. Just as important, the inventories, analysis, and related study outputs generated by this Feasibility Study process can serve as an important reference source and/or model that will be useful to all entities interested in the Upper Mississippi River basin and its contributing watershed. The process and the

information generated will improve future watershed resource management, multi-level governmental decision-making, and associated public education.

We have been notified that an Issues Resolution Conference has been scheduled in late February. This meeting will allow all interested parties the opportunity to gain clarification on the process to date as well as further scope potential cost-sharing arrangements associated with each of the Feasibility Studies. Because our ability to participate in terms of available funding is uncertain, it is premature for DNR to offer letter of intent commitments at this time. However, we believe that the Issues Resolution Conference will provide the basis for further deliberation on the issue of DNR participation, including potential funding arrangements, and we welcome the chance to do so.

Please keep DNR informed as the process moves forward. You can contact me at (651) 296-2540 with any questions that you may have regarding this letter.

Sincerely,

Steven Morse, Deputy Commissioner
Commissioner's Office

c: Allen Garber
Brad Moore
Kurt Ulrich
Division Directors
Regional Directors

COESUPPORT.WPD

# Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

*Office of the Commissioner*

January 19, 2001

Colonel Kenneth Kasprisin
District Engineer
St. Paul District Corps of Engineers
Army Corps of Engineers Centre
190 Fifth Street East
St. Paul, Minnesota 55101-1638

RE: Interagency Cooperation for Upper Mississippi River Basin Resource Management

Dear Colonel Kasprisin:

The state of Minnesota appreciates our history of water resource protection efforts in cooperation with the U.S. Corps of Engineers (USACE). The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), in the role of coordinating basin planning efforts with all levels of government in partnership with individual and organized citizens, recognizes benefits from close cooperation with the USACE in the Upper Mississippi Basin. Recent examples of productive cooperation are in the Big Sandy Watershed Project and with the Lake Margaret Watershed (Gull Lake System) diagnostic study, in which the USACE is a valuable partner, along with the state and local agencies.

The MPCA supports the USACE's willingness to share federal resources, especially their particular expert resources, to manage water quantity issues, as well as water resource quality. We look forward to future opportunities for cooperation as defined by our interactive basin planning effort.

Sincerely,

Lisa J. Thorvig

Lisa J. Thorvig
Deputy Commissioner

LJT:jae

520 Lafayette Rd. N.; St. Paul, MN 55155-4194; (651) 296-6300 (Voice); (651) 292-5332 (TTY)
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**April 24, 2001**

# PARTNERING AGREEMENT

**WHEREAS,** the Mississippi Headwaters Board (the Board or MHB) is a joint powers board consisting of Commissioners from Clearwater, Hubbard, Beltrami, Cass, Itasca, Aitkin, Crow Wing, and Morrison Counties which was created by Minnesota Statutes 103F.361 through 103F.366 in January of 1981. The Board's primary mission is to protect and enhance the scientific, natural, cultural, historic, and recreational values of the Mississippi River's first 400 miles. The Board achieves its mission through education, land stewardship, and partnerships with other organizations in the watershed.

**WHEREAS,** the St. Paul District of the United State Army Corps of Engineers (the Corps) is an executive agency of the United States of America. Its civil works missions include regulating discharges of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States (including certain wetlands) under §404 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act of 1972, regulating structures and other works in navigable waters (including the Mississippi River) under §10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899, operating and maintaining dams and reservoirs at the headwaters of the Mississippi River for navigation, natural resources management and other purposes, and performing a comprehensive Watershed Management Study of the Upper Mississippi River from Hastings, Minnesota to Lake Itasca (which was initiated at the request of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the U.S. House of Representatives by a resolution dated 15 April 1999).

**WHEREAS,** it is the mutual desire of the Board and the Corps to accomplish their respective missions in coordination and cooperation with each other.

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this agreement is to provide a vehicle for the Board and the Corps to coordinate their respective missions with each other by encouraging frequent communication, open and candid dialog, and the sharing of information to the greatest extent possible. It is the goal of the parties to encourage public understanding, promote mutual goals, and maximize the use of our limited resources as we pursue our respective roles in the management of the Upper Mississippi River Basin.

**NOW THEREFORE,** the parties agree as follows:

1. That each party shall identify one or more points of contact to facilitate better communications and fully informed decision-making by both entities in their respective roles of Mississippi River related planning, natural resources management, project operations, and regulatory functions. The points of contact may be changed at any time by written notice to the other party.

2. The point of contact for the Mississippi Headwaters Board is:

   Jane E. Van Hunnik, MHB Director
   Box 3000, Walker, MN, 56484
   (218) 547-7263

3. The points of contact for the Corps are:

   a. Regulatory Issues
      Robert Whiting
      Chief, Regulatory Branch
      (651) 290-5376

   b. Natural Resources and Project Operations Issues
      Gregg Struss
      Operations Manager, Headwaters Project Office
      (218) 829-2797

   c. Planning and Project Issues
      Ed McNally
      Project Manager, Project Management Division
      (651) 290-5387

4. MHB and Corps representatives will coordinate day-to-day activities (as appropriate) to improve each entity's ability to provide the public with better public service, minimize regulatory duplication, promote mutual natural resources goals, and optimize the use of our limited resources as we undertake our respective missions in the management of the Upper Mississippi River Basin. This enhanced coordination will be used in both ongoing and future operational, planning, regulatory, and water resources management missions of the parties. This agreement is intended to promote frequent informal communications between the parties and provide both parties to this agreement with opportunities for early input into the other's permit and/or zoning evaluations, water resource preservation and/or environmental enhancement planning, and lake level and river discharge management activities within the MHB corridor.

5. Each party to this agreement will acknowledge the regulatory jurisdiction of the other by using its best efforts to: 1) Inform permit applicants that permits or approvals from the

Federal government do not obviate the need to get permits or approvals required by State and Local governments (and vice versa), and 2) Share information regarding ongoing and completed permit and zoning actions (as appropriate and to the extent allowed by law).

6. The Corps and the MHB will explore formal and informal opportunities for partnering to study and improve the watershed of the Mississippi Headwaters. These opportunities may include: 1) Jointly participating in reconnaissance studies, 2) Entering into cost-sharing agreements for feasibility studies, 3) Coordinating projects that may flow out from planning/design studies, 4) Cooperating in the preparation and review of NEPA documents, 5) Co-sponsoring public meetings of mutual interest, and 6) Providing cross links from the Corps web site to MHB web site and vice versa.

7. **Funding:**

   a. The Corps is funded by Congressional appropriations. Any obligations created by this agreement shall be subject to the availability of funds appropriated for the missions identified herein and allotted to the St. Paul District for those purposes.

   b. The Board is funded by the Minnesota Legislature and by its represented Counties. Any obligations created by this agreement shall be subject to the availability of funds allotted to Mississippi Headwaters Board for those purposes.

8. **Limitations.** Nothing in this document creates any legally enforceable right or obligation. The parties recognize that they are each governed by their own statutory authorities, responsibilities, and limitations and that nothing in this document in any way modifies or abridges those authorities, responsibilities or limitations.

Virgil H. Foster — April 26, 01

Commissioner Virgil Foster, MHB Chairperson — Date

25 Apr 01

Colonel Kenneth S. Kasprisin, District Engineer — Date

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER
500 Lafayette Road
St. Paul, Minnesota 55155-4037

May 16, 2002

Ed McNally
Dept. of the Army
St. Paul District, COE
190 Fifth Street East
St. Paul, MN 55101-1638

Dear Mr. McNally,

Re: DNR Involvement in ROPE Study

This letter is written in response to your request for a detailed list of Department of Natural Resources (DNR) staff approved to participate in the Corp of Engineers Upper Mississippi River Headwaters Reservoirs Operations Plan Evaluation (ROPE) Study. A list of the DNR staff designated to receive an invitation to participate in the study is enclosed. As I indicated at the meeting, the department can participate in the study on a very limited basis at the present time. Please note, that the department's level of effort is scaled back from the initial participation model that was recommended by your office.

Please feel free to call Laurie Martinson of my staff at 651-215-6069 if you have any questions regarding the DNR's involvement in your study.

Sincerely,

Steven Morse
Deputy Commissioner

c: Brad Moore, Assistant Commissioner
Division Directors
Regional Directors
DNR Participants

DNR INFORMATION: 651-296-6157, 1-888-646-6367 (TTY: 651-296-5484, 1-800-657-3929) FAX: 651-296-4799

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**Department of Natural Resources**
**List of ROPE Study Participants**
**May 6, 2002**

| | |
|---|---|
| Partnering Team: | Steven Morse, Deputy Commissioner, St.Paul, MN<br>Laurie Martinson, Field Operations Manager, St. Paul, MN<br>Mel Sinn, Division of Waters, St. Paul MN |
| Delivery Team: | Mel Sinn, Division of Waters, St.Paul, MN<br>John Steward, Division of Trails and Waterways, Walker, MN |
| Recreation Task Force: | John Steward, Division of Trails and Waterways, Walker, MN |
| Environmental Task Force: | Don Pierce, Division of Wildlife, Grand Rapids, MN<br>Steve Colvin, Division of Ecological Services, St. Paul, MN<br>Chris Kavanaugh, Division of Fisheries, Grand Rapids, MN<br>Howard Christman, Division of Waters, Grand Rapids, MN |
| Flood and Erosion Control Task Force: | No staff approved for this task force. The department will respond to specific questions that arise during the ROPE study. |
| Cross Lake Forum: | Ron Morriem, Division of Waters, Brainerd, MN<br>Marty Anderson, Division of Wildlife, Brainerd, MN |
| Gull Lake Forum: | Ron Morriem, Division of Waters, Brainerd, MN<br>Marty Anderson, Division of Wildlife, Brainerd, MN |
| Leech Lake: | Don Pierce, Division of Wildlife, Grand Rapids, MN<br>John Steward, Trails and Waterways, Walker, MN |
| Sandy Lake Forum: | Lonnie Thomas, Division of Waters, Brainerd, MN<br>Dave Dickey, Division of Wildlife, Aitkin, MN<br>Rian Reed, Division of Fisheries, Grand Rapids, MN |
| Winnie Area: | Howard Christman, Division of Waters, Grand Rapids, MN<br>Chris Kavanaugh, Division of Fisheries, Grand Rapids, MN<br>Don Pierce, Division of Wildlife, Grand Rapids, MN |
| Pokegema Area: | Howard Christman, Division of Waters, Grand Rapids, MN<br>Chris Kavanaugh, Division of Fisheries, Grand Rapids, MN<br>Jim Schneeweis, Division of Wildlife, Grand Rapids, MN |

# Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

June 19, 2002

Mr. Ed McNally
Department of the Army
St. Paul District, COE
190 Fifth Street East
St. Paul, MN 55101-1638

RE: MPCA Involvement in Reservoirs Operations Plan Evaluation (ROPE) Study

Dear Mr. McNally:

This letter is written in response to your request for a list of Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) staff approved to participate in the Corp of Engineers Upper Mississippi River Headwaters Reservoirs Operations Plan Evaluation (ROPE) Study. The list of the MPCA staff designated to receive invitation to participate in the ROPE Study is enclosed. For the ROPE study, the MPCA staff participation will be coordinated by Jim Hodgson, our Upper Mississippi Basin Planning Coordinator. As indicated by Mr. Hodgson at prior meetings, the MPCA participation in the ROPE Study will be on a very limited basis at the present time.

If you have any questions or require additional information regarding the MPCA's participation in the ROPE Study, please feel free to call Jim Hodgson, of my staff, at (218) 828-6065.

Sincerely,

Rodney E. Massey

Rodney E. Massey, P.E.
Division Director
Regional Environmental Management Division

REM:dmb

Enclosure

cc: Reed Larson, Brainerd Regional Manager
Jeff Lewis, Detroit Lakes Regional Manager
Suzanne Hanson, Duluth Regional Manager
Jim Hodgson, UMMRB Coordinator
MPCA participants

520 Lafayette Rd. N., St. Paul, MN 55155-4194; (651) 296-6300 (Voice); (651) 282-5332 (TTY)
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Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
List of ROPE Study Participants
June 5, 2002

| | |
|---|---|
| Partnering Team: | Rodney E. Massey, Division Director, REM Division, St.Paul, MN<br>Reed Larson, Brainerd Manager, REM Division, Brainerd, MN |
| Delivery Team: | Jim Hodgson, UMRBC, REM Division, Brainerd, MN |
| Recreation Task Force: | No staff approved for this task force. Recreation issues related to MPCA programs will be addressed on a case by case basis. |
| Environmental Task Force: | Jim Hodgson, UMRBC, REM Division, Brainerd, MN<br>Ken LeVoir, Project Manager, REM Division, Brainerd, MN<br>Bruce Wilson, Research Scientist, PP Division, St. Paul, MN |
| Flood and Erosion Control: | On an as-needed basis, the staff assigned to the Environmental Task Force will also participate in the Flood and Erosion Control Task Force. |
| Cross Lake Forum: | Jim Hodgson, UMRBC, REM Division, Brainerd<br>Ken LeVoir, Project Manager, REM Division, Brainerd |
| Gull Lake Forum: | Jim Hodgson, UMRBC, REM Division, Brainerd<br>Ken LeVoir, Project Manager, REM Division, Brainerd |
| Leech Lake: | Jim Hodgson, UMRBC, REM Division, Brainerd<br>Ken LeVoir, Project Manager, REM Division, Brainerd |
| Sandy Lake Forum: | Jim Hodgson, UMRBC, REM Division, Brainerd<br>Tom Schuab, Project Manager, REM Division, Duluth |
| Winnie Area: | Jim Hodgson, UMRBC, REM Division, Brainerd<br>Bruce Paakh, Project Manager, REM Division, Detroit Lakes |
| Pokegema Area: | Jim Hodgson, UMRBC, REM Division, Brainerd<br>Tom Schuab, Project Manager, REM Division, Duluth |

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER
500 Lafayette Road
St. Paul, Minnesota 55155-4037

December 20, 2002

Ed McNally
Department of the Army
St. Paul District, COE
190 Fifth Street East
St. Paul, MN 55101-1638

Dear Mr. McNally,

Re: ROPE Study desired future management objectives

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) would like to offer the following desired future management objectives for U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and U.S. Forest Service long-range operating plan study for the Mississippi River Headwaters reservoirs.

First, the DNR is interested in managing the reservoirs as a river reservoir system. This means that overall benefits of the river system are maximized and that site decisions are not made to the detriment of benefits to the system as a whole as opposed to a system of independent lakes.

Second, during the study process, the DNR would like to encourage dialogue concerning a shift of reservoir operations to achieve a more natural flow regime. While a return to natural flows can improve habitat, reduce erosion, and minimize flood damages, the potential impacts on river/reservoir users would have to be examined.

Third, it is important that the existing statutory Ordinary High-Water Levels (OHWLs) and the 100-year flood event levels are not increased. Local governments have made planning and zoning decisions based on these regulatory elevations. For consistency in planning and enforcement it is important that these regulatory elevations not be changed without full consideration of these impacts and in consultation with local government and state and federal agencies.

Finally, the DNR recommends that plans for releasing emergency supplemental flows be re-focused to address a 500 to 1,000-year frequency drought event. The competition between downstream water users and the recreation interests related to reservoirs will be an important driving factor in the final reservoir operation plan. Planning for a 500 to 1,000-year frequency drought event will force a discussion about the efficacy of using reservoir releases to meet downstream water needs under a severe drought event. It is recommended that an evaluation of water supply needs during a severe drought scenario be included in the scope of the Environmental Impact Statement.

DNR staff participating in the ROPE process through the partnering team, delivery team, task forces, and lake forums will be using these four general objectives to guide their involvement in the study. As one of the partners in this study, I felt that it was important to share this general direction with you early in the process.

DNR INFORMATION: 651-296-6157, 1-888-646-6367 (TTY: 651-296-5484, 1-800-657-3929) FAX: 651-296-4799

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Please feel free to call Laurie Martinson of my staff at 651-215-6069 if you have any questions regarding these comments or the DNR's involvement in your study.

Sincerely,

Steven Morse
Deputy Commissioner

Cc: Brad Moore, Assistant Commissioner
Kent Lokkesmoe, Lee Pfannmuller, Ron Payer, Tim Bremicker
Paul Swenson, John Guenther, Kathleen Wallace
DNR ROPE Study participants

# Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe

*George Goggleye*, Chairman
*Arthur "Archie" LaRose*, Secretary/Treasurer

District I Representative
*Burton "Luke" Wilson*

District II Representative
*Lyman L. Losh*

District III Representative
*Donald "Mick" Finn*

August 30, 2005

USA Corps of Engineers, St. Paul District
Attn: Edward McNally
190 5th Street
St. Paul, MN 55101

RE: FINAL – Reservoir Operations Plan Evaluation Study

Dear Mr. McNally:

Enclosed you will find the FINAL R.O.P.E. Study document that was compiled by the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe.

Portions of the enclosed documentation are from our contracted individuals and that of the Leech Lake Division of Resource Management staff.

Not many additional changes were made, as it was considered to be complete in its entirety when it was duly presented.

Attached is the May 23, 2003 Version of "Attachment I", the form that the ACOE requested that the Leech Lake Band initially complete. As mentioned in previous meetings with the Division of Resource Management Staff and in meetings with the Tribal Council, it has been stated numerous times that the Band as a whole do not and will not consent to its completion.

We view all these resources as highly significant in our culture and that we are not able to differentiate which is more important than the other. All resources are important in maintaining our cultural identity. They are the fundamental foundation of our existence and as part of our living as Anishinabe people here on the Leech Lake Reservation; this principle will never change.

Thank you for your patience and understanding during this process.

If you should have any questions or concerns please contact me at 218-335-2940.

Respectfully submitted,

Gina M. Papasodora
*Tribal Historic Preservation Officer*

**Leech Lake Tribal Historic Preservation Office – *Established in 1996***
6530 U.S. 2 NW * Cass Lake, Minnesota 56633
(218) 335-2940 * FAX (218) 335-2974
llthpo@hotmail.com

# Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe

*George J. Goggleye Jr.*, Chairman
*Arthur "Archie" LaRose*, Secretary/Treasurer

District I Representative
*Robbie M. Howe*

District II Representative
*Lyman L. Losh*

District III Representative
*Donald "Mick" Finn*

July 26, 2006

Colonel Pfenning, District Engineer, St. Paul District
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
ATTN: Mr. Steve Clark, Project Management Branch
190 Fifth Street East
St. Paul, MN 55101-1638

Dear Colonel Pfenning:

Please find the enclosed Tribal Resource Protection Plan pertinent to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE) operated reservoir systems on the Leech Lake Reservation. This Tribal plan is being provided to the COE to be used in conjunction with the reservoir operation plan evaluation (ROPE) currently being conducted by the Corps.

The Leech Lake Tribal Government looks forward to continued cooperation and coordination with the COE in the management of our Federally protected Treaty resource rights. Feel free to contact me at your convenience if we may further discuss any of these matters. My phone is 218-335-7400.

Sincerely,

Richard Robinson

Richard Robinson, Director
Leech Lake Division of Resources Management

c. Leech Lake Tribal Council

115 Sixth Street NW Suite E – Cass Lake, Minnesota 56633
(218) 335-8200 – Fax (218) 335-8309

July 26, 2007
Leech Lake Band of Chippewa Indians
Tribal Resource Protection Plan for COE Operated Reservoirs on the Leech Lake Reservation

Goals

- Operate the reservoirs in a manner consistent with protection of the perpetual resource rights contained in the Treaties between the Leech Lake Tribal Government and the United States Government.
- Operate the reservoirs in a manner consistent with the Water Management Policy of the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe as stated below:

  "The Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe Tribal Council finds that water is a primary resource of the natural resource system and is integral to the health and welfare of the Leech Lake Band. Protecting the quality and quantity of the Band's water resources is the objective of laws and management plans adopted by the Leech Lake Tribal Government. Furthermore, the inter-relationships of water and other natural resources is such that the management of plant, soil, air and mineral resources has both direct and indirect effects on the quality and quantity of water, fish, wild rice, wildlife and other resources. These and all other interactions of resources will be considered when resource planning and management activities are engaged. Laws, standards and management plans regarding water in and on the Leech Lake Indian Reservation will be interpreted to meet the goals and objectives of the above stated policy."

Plan Component Objectives

- Manage the reservoir and connecting waters to protect and promote desired beneficial productivity including but not limited to walleye, whitefish, tullibee and wild rice and, the ecosystems that support this desired productivity.

- Promote the use of best soil and water management practices in the reservoir watersheds including erosion protection and other non-point source pollution best practices

- Broaden the currently managed maximum and minimum pool elevation by approximately 20% as part of an effort to better reflect natural seasonal hydrologic stage, flow patterns and meteorological variability

- To the best extent practicable, minimize impacts to archeological sites

- Maintain reasonable water access to the reservoirs

Topics for Further Investigation

- Assess the seasonal and meteorological variations on total mercury impacts in the reservoir system

- Evaluate the impacts of 4000 cfs combined outflow from Winnibigoshish and Leech Lakes on Ball Club Lake

# Leech Lake Band Of Ojibwe

*George J. Goggleye, Jr.*, **Chairman**
*Arthur "Archie" La Rose*, **Secretary/Treasurer**

**District I Representative** *Robbie M. Howe*
**District II Representative** *Lyman L. Losh*
**District III Representative** *Donald "Mick" Finn*

March 19, 2007

MSP 27 Mar 07

Col. Michael F. Pfenning
District Engineer and Commander
US Army Corps of Engineers (COE)
Sibley Square at Mears Park
190, 5th Street East, Suite 401
St. Paul, MN 55101-1638

Dear Col. Pfenning,

I appreciate your recent visit to the Leech Lake Reservation, and hope this meeting, along with the draft letter you reviewed, emphasized the issues we have with the water level management on Leech, Winnibigoshish and Cass Lake reservoirs. Our proposed water management levels are attached along with our Tribal Resource Protection Plan for the COE Operated Reservoirs on the Leech Lake Reservation. This document outlines our overall reservoir management strategy goals and objectives. You will note that our attached water management level graphs are quite similar to the COE's proposed alternative water level management. We welcome the opportunity to discuss the differences that do exist and present you and your staff with management rationale supporting our position.

We will support the attached water management levels provided they are selected as the preferred alterative and adopted in the decision notice. As part of this compromise we also want the items that are outlined below be included as part of the environmental assessment.

**1) History**

Clearly state in the history section of the document that the dams on Leech and Winnibigoshish Lakes were constructed despite strident Tribal opposition. The dams caused the flooding and destruction of our lands, gathering camps, wild rice beds, and the graves of our ancestors. These destructive actions by the United States Government were culturally appalling, actions that were compounded by the fact that we were paid token amounts for the lost lands and it took the United States Government nearly 100 years to compensate the Tribe for the land.

**2) Trust Responsibility**

Clearly outline in the document that the U.S. Army Corps has a trust responsibility to protect and enhance the hunting, fishing, and gathering rights that the Tribe retained through Treaties on all

**115 Sixth Street NW Suite E - Cass Lake, Minnesota 56633**
**218/335-8200 - Fax 218/335-8309**

lands and waters within the boundaries of the Leech Lake Indian Reservation. Our Treaties with the Federal Government must be recognized as the "law of the land", superseding most other laws and the "interests" of other user groups. It is well established that the dams are not useful or effective for their intended purpose of downstream navigation, the only purpose for which they were authorized for by Congress. Therefore, the highest Federal management obligation for these reservoirs (designated uses) is to protect the Tribal Treaty obligations of the United States Government.

**3) Drawdown Benefits**

Include a detailed discussion of the advantages of having periodic drawdowns of reservoirs and all the benefits they provide for the plant and animal resources. This is basically incorporated to educate the public as to the value of drawdowns for the long-term health of the lakes in the hope they may be incorporated in the future.

**4) Monitoring Plan**

We also want the COE to develop, implement, and fund a mutually agreed upon monitoring plan that will ensure in perpetuity the health of trust resources in and on the reservoir watersheds. As part of this effort, we also want to have adaptive management provisions that will provide for the application of resource management alternatives if it is determined that Tribal Treaty resources have been jeopardized by dam operations.

**5) Annual Coordination**

We want to establish an annual meeting between the COE and the Tribe where updates on management operations and monitoring can be presented. This forum will also be used to discuss issues and strategize for issue resolution.

**6) Meeting with the new Colonel**

We assume that you will brief the new Colonel on trust issues he will be inheriting, but would also like to have him meet with our staff prior to decisions being made on the ROPE study.

Rich Robinson, the Leech Lake DRM Director, is the Tribe's primary contact for water and other resource management issues. You can contact him should you have further questions. Thank you for your attention to these important matters. We look forward to continued progress.

Sincerely,

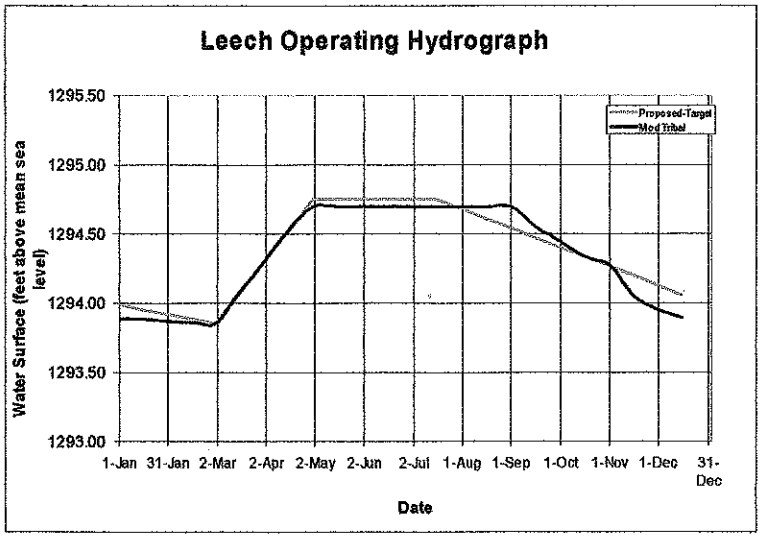
George Goggleye, Chairman
Leech Lake Tribal Council

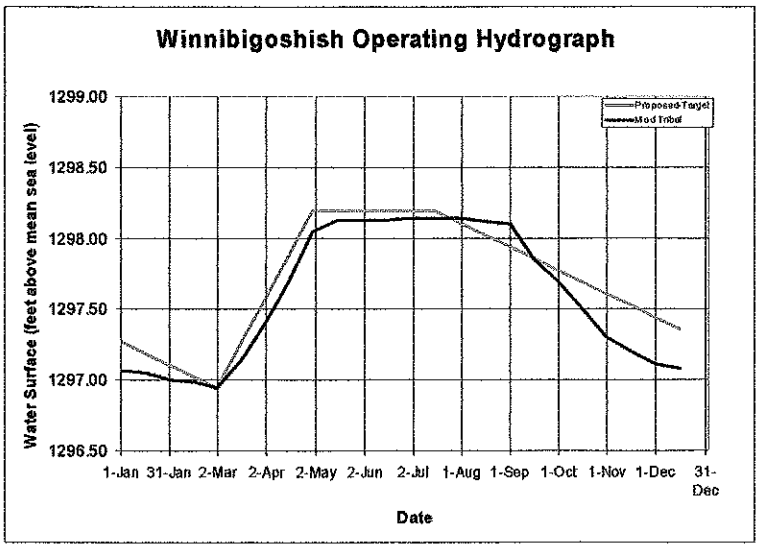
cc:
DRM
Legal Department
Steve Clark
Chippewa National Forest
Mille Lacs Lake Band of Ojibwe

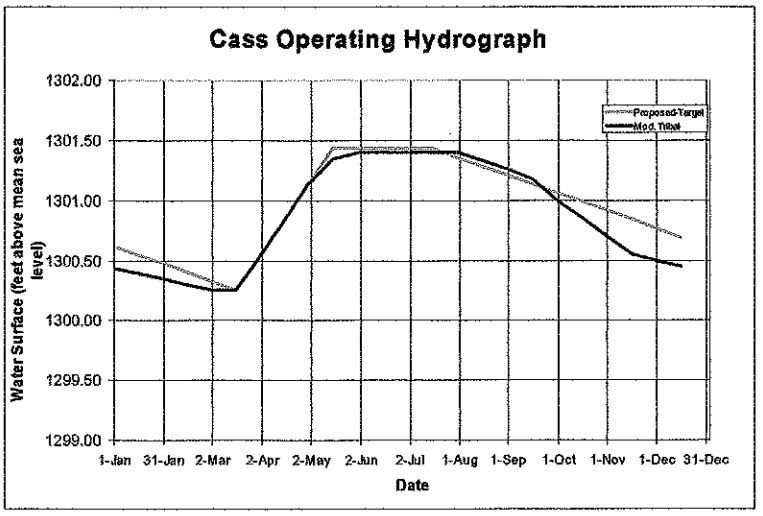
Attachments:

Reservoir Hydrographs

Leech Lake's July 26, 2006 Tribal Resource Protection Plan for COE Operated Reservoirs on the Leech Lake Reservation


Leech Operating Hydrograph
Proposed-Target
Mod Tribal
Water Surface (feet above mean sea level)
1295.50
1295.00
1294.50
1294.00
1293.50
1293.00
1-Jan 31-Jan 2-Mar 2-Apr 2-May 2-Jun 2-Jul 1-Aug 1-Sep 1-Oct 1-Nov 1-Dec 31-Dec
Date


Winnibigoshish Operating Hydrograph
Proposed-Target
Mod Tribal
Water Surface (feet above mean sea level)
1299.00
1298.50
1298.00
1297.50
1297.00
1296.50
1-Jan 31-Jan 2-Mar 2-Apr 2-May 2-Jun 2-Jul 1-Aug 1-Sep 1-Oct 1-Nov 1-Dec 31-Dec
Date


Cass Operating Hydrograph
Proposed-Target
Mod. Tribal
Water Surface (feet above mean sea level)
1302.00
1301.50
1301.00
1300.50
1300.00
1299.50
1299.00
1-Jan 31-Jan 2-Mar 2-Apr 2-May 2-Jun 2-Jul 1-Aug 1-Sep 1-Oct 1-Nov 1-Dec 31-Dec
Date

July 26, 2007
Leech Lake Band of Chippewa Indians
Tribal Resource Protection Plan for COE Operated Reservoirs on the Leech Lake Reservation

Goals

- Operate the reservoirs in a manner consistent with protection of the perpetual resource rights contained in the Treaties between the Leech Lake Tribal Government and the United States Government.
- Operate the reservoirs in a manner consistent with the Water Management Policy of the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe as stated below:

  "The Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe Tribal Council finds that water is a primary resource of the natural resource system and is integral to the health and welfare of the Leech Lake Band. Protecting the quality and quantity of the Band's water resources is the objective of laws and management plans adopted by the Leech Lake Tribal Government. Furthermore, the inter-relationships of water and other natural resources is such that the management of plant, soil, air and mineral resources has both direct and indirect effects on the quality and quantity of water, fish, wild rice, wildlife and other resources. These and all other interactions of resources will be considered when resource planning and management activities are engaged. Laws, standards and management plans regarding water in and on the Leech Lake Indian Reservation will be interpreted to meet the goals and objectives of the above stated policy."

Plan Component Objectives

- Manage the reservoir and connecting waters to protect and promote desired beneficial productivity including but not limited to walleye, whitefish, tullibee and wild rice and, the ecosystems that support this desired productivity.

- Promote the use of best soil and water management practices in the reservoir watersheds including erosion protection and other non-point source pollution best practices

- Broaden the currently managed maximum and minimum pool elevation by approximately 20% as part of an effort to better reflect natural seasonal hydrologic stage, flow patterns and meteorological variability

- To the best extent practicable, minimize impacts to archeological sites

- Maintain reasonable water access to the reservoirs

Topics for Further Investigation

- Assess the seasonal and meteorological variations on total mercury impacts in the reservoir system

- Evaluate the impacts of 4000 cfs combined outflow from Winnibigoshish and Leech Lakes on Ball Club Lake

# Leech Lake Band Of Ojibwe

*George J. Goggleye, Jr.*, **Chairman**
*Arthur "Archie" La Rose*, **Secretary/Treasurer**

**District I Representative**
*Robbie M. Howe*

**District II Representative**
*Lyman L. Losh*

**District III Representative**
*Donald "Mick" Finn*


Feb. 25, 2008

Col. Jon L. Christensen
District Engineer and Commander
US Army Corps of Engineers (COE)
Sibley Square at Mears Park
190, 5th Street East, Suite 401
St. Paul, MN 55101-1638

Dear Col. Christensen,

Staff from the Leech Lake Reservation's Division of Recourses Management (DRM) recently met with Steve Clark to discuss progress on the Upper Mississippi Reservoir Operating Plan Evaluation Study (ROPE). We are glad that funding has been secured that should allow the project to be completed and badly needed changes to reservoir management implemented. We are pleased to see that the proposal has made an effort to more closely simulate nature water level fluctuations and that greater down stream flows are also proposed.

After the meeting with Mr. Clark, the DRM staff discussed the most recent proposals for water level management on Leech, Winnibigoshish, and Cass Lake. Although we agree that your proposal is a step in the right direction we still have a concern over how this will affect tribal member's ability to harvest wild rice in some situations. This is of most concern on Lake Winnibigoshish where up in the Ravens Bay Flowage a water level decrease of only a few inches can greatly reduce tribal member's ability to harvest wild rice. To address this problem we think it would be best to hold off starting the fall drawdown until mid August instead of mid July as the plan proposes. Although this does not as closely simulate what should naturally happen compared to what is proposed, it is not far off. Much the same result could also be obtained by simply reducing the rate of drawdown during the first month, or so, to accommodate wild rice harvest activities. It would probably not be necessary to operate under this scenario when water levels are at or above normal operating levels, but it is critical during years when you are near or below the bottom of the operating band. I think that further discussions between your staff and the DRM can result in a remedy that will better meet the needs of tribal members, while still accomplishing many of the Corps goals for the new plan.

In the 1990 Mississippi River Headwaters Lakes in Minnesota Low Flow Review (US Army Corps of Engineers, 1990), the relative priority for uses of Federal project waters at the Headwaters were identified. Commercial downstream navigation was listed as the highest priority followed by Treaty Trust resources, ahead of all other general public good uses. We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hope you will honor these priorities and would like to have some assurance that the whole issue of treaty rights and the trust responsibility of the Army Corps to the Leech Lake Band will be outlined and addressed in the current Environmental Impact Study (EIS). These responsibilities have been repeatedly raised throughout the study and you will find some of them outlined in our letter dated March 19, 2007. To this end, I invite you to come up and visit with our DRM staff to discuss these issues. This would give you the opportunity to discuss the issues that are of concern to us, and make sure they are addressed in the plan and your decision. Please contact Richard Robinson, our Director or DRM concerning arrangements.

Sincerely,

George Goggleye, Chairman
Leech Lake Tribal Council

cc:
DRM
Legal Department
Steve Clark
Chippewa National Forest
Mille Lacs Lake Band of Ojibwe

# Appendix C

# Forest Service Regional Forester Sensitive Species Evaluation

# (To be included in the Final EIS)

# Appendix D

# Cultural Resource Coordination

# (To be included in the Final EIS)