

# *Memorandum for the Record*

23 July 2003

**Subject: Delivery Team Meetings for the Reservoir Operations Plan Evaluation (ROPE) Study – Upper Mississippi River Headwater Reservoirs Project**

1. On 21 July 2003, the ROPE Delivery Team met in the Executive Conference Room of the St. Paul District Office beginning at 10:30 a.m. An invitation was provided to all ROPE Delivery Team members. Attendees representing the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe, The Nature Conservancy (TNC), the Mississippi Headwaters Board, and Corps District functional ROPE Delivery Team members participated (see enclosure 1 for a list of the attendees).

2. The focus of the meeting was to update the Delivery Team on the ongoing study efforts and status and to plan the continued mobilization of the Task Forces and Lake/River Citizen Groups. The specific agenda used for this meeting is attached as enclosure 2. Issues and items of noteworthy discussion at the meeting follow.

- There was discussion regarding the formalization of partnership agreements between the Corps and the Forest Service to jointly complete the ROPE study and Environmental Impact Statement. This includes a 15% service contribution and 85% Corps contribution of all costs to complete the study. Coordination to obtain the initial Service funding is being completed.
- The ROPE funding available this fiscal year is approximately \$450,000 (this amount includes the \$45,000 from the Forest Service). This funding is being used primarily to mobilize the optimization and simulation modeling and related H&H evaluations and continue coordination efforts. Available ROPE funding, which must see us through to the end of September, is now down to less than \$100,000. So, this shortage of end-of-year funding could affect the amount of contracting being planned with the U.S. Geological Survey for groundwater evaluations and the amount that can be committed to the Tribal interest inventories and the cultural inventories this year. However, as in previous years, the end of the fiscal year brings a potential for more end-of-year funding, and we need to be ready to use those funds if they become available. It was agreed that each functional representative should provide the Project Manager with work items that could be done yet this fiscal year if additional end-of-year funding becomes available.
- There was an overview of the milestone schedules for ROPE, assuming the lack of funding does not impede progress. Specifically, the hope is to have the two planning decision models to a point of completion in late December 2003 so that

the initial runs of each can begin. The schedule is to have a screening of alternatives report completed in July 2004; that report will be the first opportunity for the agencies and the public to review a ROPE product.

- There was considerable discussion about preparations needed in order to conduct upcoming Citizen Volunteer Group meetings (these are to be scheduled between 23 July and 8 August). The Lake Group champions have already been briefed at a meeting that was held at Gull Lake on 15 July.
- There was considerable discussion about the need to coordinate upcoming meetings with the interagency task forces between 19 and 22 August. Champions for these groups need to coordinate a schedule for the sequencing of these meetings so that Beth Faber (the HEC PRM model expert) and Kenton Spading (our lead STELLA coordinator) are available to provide support at each task force meeting.
- The status of efforts to contract the sole source services of the Leech Lake Band and the Mille Lacs Band was reported. The Tribes are now preparing proposals to accomplish this work. It was mentioned that it will be important to obtain the Tribes' inputs in time to integrate them into the STELLA and PRM models within the next 6 to 8 months – in order to stay on schedule.
- Corps funding for Fiscal Year 2004 will range from about \$300,000 to as much as \$750,000. The \$300,000 is the amount in the Corps budget now, and the \$750,000 is the amount that Congress may make available via a line item appropriation. So, there will be ROPE money next year, but we don't yet know how much.
- It was requested that all Delivery Team leaders, and especially group champions, review the content of the ROPE web site to insure that it is up to date and complete. Marilyn Kruchten is the primary editor and web site content coordinator; so, when updates and/or adjustments are available, they should be provided to Marilyn for posting.
- Emphasis was placed on the challenge for the Delivery Team members and group champions to develop a viable strategy for collecting and inputting input/output relationships into the PRM and STELLA models, to make efforts to update the ROPE web site, and to prepare for the upcoming task force meetings.
- Jim Hodgson, MPCA representative, indicated a willingness to assist the Project Delivery Team and Environmental Task Force in defining the water quality issues, factors, and thresholds that could be integrated into the STELLA model. Further discussion and involvement of additional MPCA staff will be needed.
- Garth Fuller, TNC representative, indicated interest in exploring the role that TNC could play during the remainder of the ROPE study (likely assisting in defining the extent of restoration effects possible via operational changes and public education assistance). He indicated the willingness of TNC to actively participate and a desire to have follow-up ROPE discussions with the various members of the Delivery Team.

3. This meeting was very constructive. Our next team meeting is likely to be set in approximately 6 weeks.

4. After this Delivery Team meeting, a breakout session was conducted from about noon to 12:45 p.m. to brainstorm how we can best incorporate erosion into the decision models. Some progress was made exploring possible erosion thresholds and factors for incorporation into the STELLA model. However, further discussions and brainstorming on this will be needed at our upcoming Flood Control and Erosion Control Task Force meeting before a clear strategy is identified.

/ s /

Ed McNally  
Project Manager

2 Enclosures:

Meeting Roster  
Agenda

CC Distribution:

All Meeting Participants and Delivery Team Members (see roster listing). Also sent to Elisse Aune, Mille Lacs Band; Gerald White, Leech Lake Band; and Jane VanHunnik, MHB.

Subject: Project Delivery Team Meeting – 21 July 2003 – Exec. Conf. Room  
RE: Upper Mississippi River Headwaters ROPE Studies

## Sign-In Roster

	<u>Name</u>	<u>Organization</u>	<u>Email and/or Telephone</u>
1.	Ed McNally	COE	651-290-5387
2.	BRAD JOHNSON	COE	(651) 290-5250
3.	Matt Bray	COE	651-290-5647
4.	TERRY ZIEN	COE	(651) 290-5714
5.	Marilyn Kruchten	COE	(651) 290-5315
6.	Tom Selwold		(651) 292-8790
7.	Dennis Holme	COE	(651) 290-5614
8.	Rick Carlson	COE	651-290-5259
9.	Frank Star	COE	651-290-5328
10.	Matt Pearcy	COE	(651) 290-5252
11.	Kenton Spatz	COE	651-290-5623
12.	JIM HODGSON	MPLA	218-828-6065
13.	Jim Murphy	COE	651-290-5608
14.	ELISSE AONE	MLB Ojibwe	320-532-7513
15.	GARTH FULLER	TNC	218-575-3032 gfuller@tuc.org
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# A G E N D A

**Start at 10:30 a.m.**

Introductions

Overview and Status of the Study Efforts

Funding Situation

- MOU and SA solidified - Cost tracking via CEFMS (new twist)
- District FY03 funding at \$510k (includes assumed \$45k from Service)
- Only about \$90k available now (\$50k held from FS for FY04)...
- \$300k-\$750k available from COE in FY04 (\$45k to \$110k FS funding in FY04)

End of Fiscal Year Strategy for Contracts = Be prepared with scopes

Plan Formulation Modeling Search Status and Strategy

- Proposed Timelines on the Model Runs
- Update on Optimization and Simulation Models  
HEC-PRM (*Scheduled to Assist with Task Force Meetings*)  
IRW Stella

Tribal Interest Status and Strategy

Cultural Resources Inventories Status and Strategy

Groundwater Contract Work Status and Strategy

Preparations for the Upcoming Volunteer Group Meetings (*23 July – 8 August*)

- Hydraulic hydrographs done for key nodes
- Agenda and handouts distributed, meeting with champions on 15 July

Task Force Progress (*next meeting targeted for 19-22 August - with HEC support*)

- Environmental
- Recreation/Tourism
- Hydropower and Downstream Interests
- Flood Control and Erosion Control
- Cultural and/or Tribal Task Force

Other Activity Status

Open Discussion and Due Outs

Identification of Breakout Sessions Needed

**Close Meetings at noon – Conduct Breakout Sessions, as needed**