

**Minutes of the
Upper Mississippi River System
Environmental Management Program
Coordinating Committee**

**August 19, 1999
Summer Quarterly Meeting**

**Four Points Hotel Sheraton
Rock Island, Illinois**

John Blankenship of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m. on Thursday, August 19, 1999. Other EMP-CC members present were Dusty Rhodes (USACE), Bob Delaney (USGS), Bill Bertrand (IL DNR), Kevin Szcodronski (IA DNR), Steve Johnson (MN DNR), Gordon Farabee (MO DOC), Terry Moe (WI DNR), and Bob Goodwin (MARAD). A complete list of attendees is attached.

Minutes of the May Meeting

The minutes of the May 20, 1999 EMP-CC meeting were approved as written.

Program Management

Leo Foley reported that EMP expenditures totaled \$11.5 million, or 63 percent of the \$18.4 million FY 99 allocation, as of June 30. Foley said he expects the program to achieve an expenditure rate of close to 100 percent for the fiscal year. The St. Paul District estimates that it may have between \$200,000 and \$300,000 in unexpended HREP funds available for reprogramming. Foley said he will ask USGS for one or more scopes of work identifying specific tasks that could be accomplished in FY 99 or 00 with this funding.

Foley reported that the House has approved the President's request for \$18.955 million in FY 00 EMP funding. The Senate-passed amount is \$16.055 million. House and Senate conferees have not yet reconciled their energy and water spending measures. As a result, the Corps has prepared proposed allocations for both the House and Senate figures (see attached). Those proposed allocations assume 14.6 percent savings and slippage; administrative costs of \$110,000; habitat needs assessment costs of \$500,000; and the traditional one-third/two-thirds split between the LTRMP and HREPs. Within the habitat program, the traditional allocation among the districts (i.e., MVP - 35%, MVR - 40%, and MVS - 25%) was used. Gordon Farabee said he would like to revisit the allocation of HREP funds among the districts under the reauthorized EMP.

As reported at the February EMP-CC meeting, projected EMP funding is \$26.0 million in total for FY 01 and 02. Foley explained that this amount reflects the extremely tight budget ceilings for the Corps' construction general account in FY 01 and beyond. These ceilings continue to be a very significant constraint on the Corps' budget. However, Foley noted that the EMP

funding level will likely be reassessed as the President's FY 01 budget proposal is developed. The higher EMP authorization enacted as part of the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 1999 will be one factor considered in this reassessment.

Foley also indicated that MVD and the districts are currently doing FY 01-04 budget drills exploring alternatives for "ramping up" the EMP to its new authorized funding level. Preliminary results from the drills indicate that it would take three to four years to increase program capability to the new authorized amount of \$33.17 million. Foley said the drills are being done in response to inquiries from the Assistant Secretary of the Army's (ASA's) office following the HREP dedication ceremonies. In response to a question from Terry Moe, Dusty Rhodes said reauthorization at higher funding levels would not necessarily trigger a change in the Administration's budget priorities. Rather, Rhodes attributed the ASA's recent inquiries regarding program capabilities to the Secretary's satisfaction with what he saw at the dedication ceremonies. Rhodes credited the districts and field staff from the Fish and Wildlife Service and states with the success of those ceremonies.

Reauthorization Update

Barb Naramore reported that the House and Senate passed the 1999 WRDA on August 5 and the President signed the bill into law on August 17. WRDA 99 establishes the EMP as a continuing authority, with authorized annual funding levels of \$22.75 million for HREPs and \$10.42 million for the LTRMP. Naramore noted that the non-federal share for cost-shared projects has been increased from 25 to 35 percent. A separate provision in WRDA 99 allows up to 80 percent of the non-federal share to be provided in-kind.

According to Naramore, the new authority requires an EMP report to Congress by December 31, 2004 and every six years thereafter. Each report to Congress is to include updated habitat needs information, with the first HNA to be completed by September 30, 2000. The reauthorization also directs the Corps to establish a technical advisory committee. However, Naramore observed that there appear to be some ambiguities in the legislative language regarding the technical advisory committee. Specifically, the section establishing the committee refers to the portion of the legislation that authorizes the HREPs, yet it also suggests that the committee's scope includes monitoring and the HNA. Moreover, the \$350,000 that it appears was intended for the committee is actually structured as an additional authorization for the habitat program. While they were not originally proponents of the technical committee, Naramore noted that the states did suggest ways of resolving these ambiguities in comments they offered to the conferees. These comments were not, however, reflected in the final legislation. Naramore also highlighted other provisions in WRDA 99 with a potential relationship to the EMP, including the Missouri River/Middle Mississippi habitat enhancement authority and the UMRS comprehensive plan authority. She noted that the UMRBA will be offering its perspectives regarding these provisions and monitoring their implementation.

Jeff Stein explained that American Rivers was an advocate for the technical advisory committee and said they intended the committee to consider all aspects of the EMP, not merely HREPs. Stein said American Rivers offered language for inclusion in the conference report that would have clarified the purpose of the committee. However, this language was not included in the conferees' report.

In response to a question from Bob Delaney, Holly Stoerker explained that the 1986 WRDA provision authorizing recreation projects was not deleted in the reauthorization. However, the recreation projects funding authority is only 15 years in duration and will thus expire in FY 02. With respect to funding the technical advisory committee, Delaney noted that members of the LTRMP's International Science Review Committee are not compensated for their time, though their travel costs are covered.

Terry Moe asked whether the technical advisory committee will trigger the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA). Stein said the term "advisory" was used in place of the original "review" to clarify that the committee is not intended to have any approval authority. He said "advisory" was used without consideration of any FACA implications.

Dusty Rhodes explained that the Assistant Secretary will issue guidance governing implementation of WRDA 99 and that this guidance will determine how the Corps implements the various provisions of the EMP reauthorization. In response to a question from Gordon Farabee, Rhodes said the schedule for development of this guidance is uncertain, but said there will certainly be time for interested parties to share their perspectives with the ASA before the guidance is issued.

Moe acknowledged that Corps staff have been quite busy, but urged that they continue to pursue the administrative changes recommended in the partnership Report to Congress and discussed at the May 1999 EMP-CC meeting. He asked for an update on the status of these recommendations at the EMP-CC's November meeting.

Habitat Needs Assessment

HNA Update

Mike Thompson reported that the HNA project management plan (PMP) was updated in June to reflect comments from the technical team and revisions to the estimated budget. Thompson said he anticipates future updates to the PMP in February and August 2000. Bob Clevensine reviewed the status of several PMP technical tasks, noting that the species-guild and habitat classifications should be distributed for review soon. Clevensine also reported that Gretchen Bonfert of Green Strategies has been hired to synthesize the input received from the UMRCC/Audubon Society public meetings. A replacement for Bruce Carlson as chair of the public involvement team has not been named.

Thompson reviewed the overall HNA budget, explaining that funding is currently allocated among HNA participants as follows:

- MVS — \$231,000
- MVR — \$166,000
- MVP — \$201,000
- USGS — \$285,000
- FWS — \$60,000
- MDOC — \$10,000
- Mapping Team — \$33,000

The funding allocation among tasks, based on current cost estimates, is as follows:

- HNA Administration — \$378,996
- Technical Task 1 (develop HNA model) — \$310,060
- Technical Task 2 (forecast future conditions) — \$99,260
- Technical Task 3 (identify public expectations) — \$175,000
- Technical Task 4 (identify desired future conditions and habitat needs) — \$12,040

Thompson said he expects HNA expenditures to total between \$420,000 and \$430,000 in FY 99.

Steve Johnson expressed concern that only \$12,000 has been reserved for Technical Task 4, which involves identifying desired future conditions and habitat needs. Thompson said this amount is subject to change as the specifics of Task 4 are refined. Clevestine noted that the technical team views Task 4 as essentially an integration of the results of Tasks 1-3. Thus, the team feels comfortable that Task 4 will not require significant resources. Thompson said that a small group formed by the technical team will be charged with doing the integration required for Task 4. Johnson said he is troubled by the prospect of a small group doing this synthesis. Thompson said the group may circulate its analysis for comment before the draft HNA is released. Johnson urged that this be done.

Thompson estimated that the HNA is currently about six weeks behind schedule, but said the partnership report should be completed by September 2000, the deadline under the baseline project schedule. Thompson said many of the technical tasks are scheduled for completion in January, after which the focus will shift to writing and reviewing the assessment. In response to a question from Barb Naramore, Thompson explained that review of the various technical task products will be accomplished through the established agency points of contact (POCs). Naramore urged that the review drafts and schedules also be posted on the Internet to facilitate review and comment by people who may not be linked to an HNA POC.

Dusty Rhodes noted that WRDA 99 directs completion of the HNA by September 30, 2000. While the legislation does not explicitly require the assessment to be submitted to Congress, Rhodes said there may be an expectation that the HNA will be ready to submit to Congress by this date. If this is the case, the partnership report will need to be complete well in advance to allow for Washington-level review. Thompson said the current schedule does not include time for Washington review before September 2000 and said it would be a substantial challenge to revise the schedule to provide such time. Rhodes said the Corps will explore the question further and determine whether the PMP schedule needs to be adjusted to allow time for higher level review prior to September 30, 2000.

GIS Query Tool

Carl Korschgen, Hank DeHann, and Tim Fox demonstrated the systemic GIS query tool developed for the HNA. According to Korschgen, the tool allows users to link 118 species of fish and 290 species of birds to 18 classes of vegetation. For each species, the various vegetation classes are given a habitat suitability ranking of between zero and three. Korschgen

emphasized that the query tool will be a useful general planning tool, but is not designed to identify and prioritize specific HREP locations. DeHann demonstrated how the tool can be used to answer a variety of questions, such as habitat suitability for lake sturgeon. Johnson expressed concern that the rather generalized results from such queries could easily be misinterpreted, noting for example that not all main channel habitat is equally suitable for lake sturgeon.

Korschgen and DeHann demonstrated how the HNA query tool can be supplemented with additional information, such as data and decision rules from the USGS's decision support system or the navigation study's cumulative effects study. In response to a question from John Blankenship, Korschgen said the HNA query tool can provide significant insight into issues such as where habitat can be restored most cost-effectively, but emphasized that resource managers' professional judgments will still be critical. Gordon Farabee complimented the efforts of all those involved in developing the query tool, noting that it has a tremendous range of potential applications.

Farabee asked whether a similar tool could be developed for the Mississippi below the Ohio River. Steve Cobb said the necessary habitat and land cover information is generally available, but noted that the Lower Mississippi lacks biological data comparable to what has been used to build the Upper Mississippi query tool. Jim Fisher asked about the potential to incorporate a seasonality element into the habitat suitability rankings in the UMR tool. Korschgen said this could be done, but noted that taking such a life cycle approach would require a far more complicated habitat suitability matrix.

Terry Moe noted that the amount and types of data available for use with the query tool vary considerably across the UMRS. Given this, Moe asked how the HNA will use the tool consistently across the different pools and reaches. Korschgen said this is an issue for the HNA technical team to resolve. Farabee and Bill Bertrand said the committee has been discussing how to use the tool and report results. Farabee said both the query tool and the written assessment will include caveats regarding limitations of the data. In answer to a question from Tom Edwards, Korschgen said the query tool will not include actual sampling data, but indicated that these data are available separately from USGS.

Habitat Rehabilitation and Enhancement Projects

Engineering, Design, and Construction Workshop

Leo Foley distributed a summary of the June 17, 1999 HREP engineering, design, and construction workshop. Participants included Corps personnel as well as representatives of partner agencies and interested stakeholder groups. Foley said the workshop provided an excellent opportunity for participants to exchange ideas and perspectives. According to Foley, major themes from the workshop included:

- the need for biologists to articulate project goals and then work with engineers in determining the best way to achieve those goals, and
- the importance of information exchange early in the project design process.

Jerry Skalak said participants suggested holding similar workshops approximately every two years.

Reviewing the workshop summary, Dusty Rhodes asked for clarification regarding the suggestion that HREP designs should be kept simple due to personnel changes. Chris Prinslow explained that the recommendation was to keep project operation and maintenance (O&M) simple because of turnover among the staff involved in operating the projects. Foley said the remoteness of many HREPs is another reason for keeping O&M requirements simple. Gordon Farabee offered a correction to the summary, noting that this suggestion came from a Missouri Department of Conservation participant and was incorrectly attributed to Missouri Department of Natural Resources.

Rhodes endorsed a workshop participant's call for project design costs not to exceed construction costs and asked whether there have been any such projects. Kevin Szcodronski said it is probably an exaggeration to say that design costs have actually exceeded construction costs on any HREPs, but said that design costs are certainly a relatively large part of total costs on smaller projects. Szcodronski said these high design costs are an impediment to pursuing small projects in many instances. He cited the bank stabilization project as an example, noting that it is a relatively large project with several smaller components. Treating the individual components as separate projects when it comes to design has increased costs substantially. Foley said Colonel Mudd has committed to exploring options to reduce small project costs, including design-build, work order contracts, and revising the definite project report (DPR) process. Rhodes said MVD is committed to getting more money on the ground and said the Corps will review the design costs of small projects.

Jon Duyvejonck observed that the Corps' engineering standards for habitat projects are different from the Fish and Wildlife Service's standards for similar projects. He said the Corps' more stringent standards contribute to high project costs. Rhodes said the Corps is willing to consider appropriate changes to its standards for habitat projects where human health and safety are not involved. However, Rhodes emphasized that the Corps is a premier engineering agency and will not design sub-par projects. Prinslow reminded Duyvejonck that the partner agencies are also concerned with minimizing O&M costs. He noted that this is not necessarily consistent with relaxing engineering standards, explaining that there is often a tradeoff between project first costs and O&M costs. Foley said the districts will be asking site managers to decide what O&M burden they can assume as habitat projects are designed.

Dedication Ceremonies

Reporting on the recent HREP dedication ceremonies, Skalak said Corps and Fish and Wildlife Service staff worked together closely to make the events successful. Skalak said the ceremonies were well attended by the partner agencies, elected officials and their staff, and the general public. According to Skalak, the events generated positive press coverage of the projects and the program. The Rock Island District has scheduled a dedication ceremony for the Princeton project for November 12. Rhodes emphasized the importance of these types of events in demonstrating strong public interest and support for the EMP. In answer to a question from Moe, Foley said a dedication ceremony for Pool 8 Islands Phase II is scheduled for September 17.

District Updates

Thompson reported that the Item 2 (pump stations) contract for Swan Lake is moving forward and should be completed in the second or third quarter of FY 00. Cuivre Island is scheduled for completion by September 1999, and the St. Louis District is planning a dedication ceremony. The Phase I contract for Batchtown is a Section 8(a) set-aside and is currently in negotiations. An August 27 design criteria meeting is scheduled to discuss Phases II and III of the Batchtown project. Headquarters has approved the final DPR for Calhoun Point, and plans and specifications are underway. A value engineering study for Calhoun Point will begin next week. The DPR has been initiated for Pools 25 and 26, and DPR work will start soon on Schenimann Chute. Thompson said MVS is also looking at a potential project involving stone dike alterations.

Reporting on behalf of the St. Paul District, Foley indicated that the contract for Stage 2 of Polander Lake was awarded on July 1. The island construction work will be accomplished in conjunction with the unloading of the Wilds Bend dredged material placement site. The EMP-funded cost of this work is \$1.4 million. Construction on Stage 2 will not commence until next spring because the contractor is fully committed until then. According to Foley, this delay in starting construction leaves the St. Paul District with about \$300,000 in potential unexpended funds in FY 99. The Trempealeau Refuge project is completed, save for ice damage that will be repaired next spring. Construction on the final site of the bank stabilization project began July 19 and is scheduled to be completed in September. Construction at this site was delayed so as not to disturb bald eagles nesting in the area. Phase II of Pool 8 Islands is nearly complete, with only some rock work remaining. The draft DPR for Pool Slough is complete and will be released for public review in September. The contract for Long Lake was awarded in May, and construction is scheduled to start in September. The DPR for Ambrough Slough is scheduled for completion in calendar year 1999. Project partners conducted a field visit to the Long Meadow Lake project area on July 11

Foley referenced the Rock Island District's problems with construction delays on the Spring Lake project. According to Foley, most work was completed by the July dedication ceremony and the only remaining work is the well contract. The stoplog structures for the Princeton project are being redesigned and will cost an estimated \$15,000. Foley said MVR will be taking staff from the Office of Management and Budget to visit the Banner Marsh project. He explained that Illinois has made in-kind contributions totaling an estimated \$1.3 million in Stage I work. This work was expected to meet most of the state's cost-share for the project; however, bids for the Stage II contract came in higher than expected and the project was rescoped to reduce total costs. The district expects to award the Banner Marsh Stage II contract in September. Public review of the draft DPR for Pool 11 Islands is scheduled for October 1999. Foley said MVR is working with Iowa and Wisconsin DNRs to resolve issues with mussel beds near the proposed island sites. The Rice Lake project remains on hold due to a land acquisition issue. Rock Island will be seeking to modify the draft DPRs for the Gardner Division and Pleasant Creek projects in an effort to reduce the costs of these relatively small projects. In response to a question from Farabee, Foley noted that Missouri DOC has asked MVR to raise the causeway at Cottonwood Island to reduce sedimentation and to permit access during high water. Foley said this will likely be accomplished through a repair contract. The district does not have money scheduled for the Cottonwood repair in FY 99 but may be able to award the contract and complete the repair in FY 00.

Tom Edwards cited comments in the summary of the June HREP workshop, emphasizing the importance of being open to new ideas and willing to take risks, while also seeking to save money. Edwards said he pursued several changes to the Banner Marsh project that saved considerable money while also enhancing water quality in the project area. Edwards said he believes there are opportunities to improve the project design further. Foley encouraged Edwards to consult with the site manager regarding his additional ideas and said the Corps would be happy to participate in such a meeting if desired. However, Foley noted that the project is scheduled to be put out for bid soon and said any such consultation needs to take place quickly.

In addition to dedication ceremonies for new projects, Szcodronski suggested holding anniversary celebrations to recognize successful projects completed in the EMP's early years. Rhodes encouraged this and also suggested the possibility of a reauthorization celebration.

Long Term Resource Monitoring Program

A-Team Report

Ken Brummett reported on the A-Team's August 16 meeting, at which the discussion included restructuring impacts, revised scopes of work and sampling schedules, the information needs assessment, and the LTRMP under the reauthorized EMP. Brummett said the impacts of restructuring on the field stations include:

- loss of temporary staff,
- unfilled permanent staff positions (2 field stations),
- layoff of staff (1 field station),
- impacts of the reduced sampling schedule on data quality,
- equipment deterioration,
- reduced outreach activities, and
- quality and efficiency impacts associated with retraining remaining staff to perform new functions.

Brummett cautioned that, if the LTRMP receives less than full funding in FY 00, the impacts will be even more severe. Jerry Skalak noted that some A-Team members also expressed concern with potential safety issues as the size of sampling teams is reduced.

Terry Moe said Wisconsin is quite concerned that it will not be able to implement the revised monitoring plan with the remaining staff at its field station. In addition to staff reductions, Brummett said that equipment will also be a limiting factor in implementing the new protocols. For example, he said the field stations do not have enough hydro labs to support multi-purpose sampling. Bob Delaney said all field station team leaders were asked if they could implement the revised monitoring plan with the staff they would have under restructuring. Delaney said that four of the team leaders indicated they could implement the plan, while Wisconsin's leader expressed some reservations.

Restructuring Update

Leo Foley recounted General Anderson's February 1999 directive to restructure the LTRMP in accordance with the following three principles:

- increase emphasis on data analysis relative to data collection,
- apply savings and slippage to the LTRMP consistent with its application to other projects and programs in the Corps' construction general account, and
- increase the LTRMP's flexibility and thus its capacity to handle fluctuations in its annual budget.

He noted that the current uncertainty regarding the EMP's FY 00 appropriation underscores the need to enhance the LTRMP's budget flexibility. Colonel Mudd submitted his restructuring proposal on June 9, 1999, and General Anderson approved that proposal on July 6, 1999. According to Foley, the restructuring plan is consistent with MVR's preliminary plan outlined at the May EMP-CC meeting. In addition, General Anderson approved Colonel Mudd's recommendation to assign the lead for the information needs assessment (INA) to Rock Island. Foley indicated that the next step in LTRMP restructuring will be for MVR to issue an implementation guidance letter to USGS.

Foley said Rock Island has already informed USGS that the Corps will need to review FY 00 scopes of work before September 30, 1999. Those SOWs are to include clearly identified products, delivery dates, and costs. In addition, the individual scopes are to be incorporated into an annual work plan by the end of September. Foley emphasized there is no guarantee the LTRMP will be able to recover savings and slippage in any particular year, but said there is certainly potential to do so. In order to recover savings and slippage, Foley said the LTRMP must present SOWs for discrete tasks that do not require continued funding over multiple years.

Brummett said the A-Team plans to discuss the LTRMP's future direction at its November meeting. Bill Bertrand said he does not believe issues surrounding LTRMP restructuring are entirely settled. In particular, he cautioned that it may not be possible to implement the agreed upon revised monitoring plan with available personnel. Bertrand suggested it may be preferable to eliminate a component rather than risk compromising all of the components. Foley expressed surprise, emphasizing his understanding the all partners had previously endorsed the revised monitoring plan as the best choice among a tough set of options. Moe explained that some of the partners are having second thoughts as the implementation details of the revised monitoring plan become clearer. Moe said he is concerned that the revised plan may not be viable and urged the Corps, USGS, and the states to come to an agreement regarding what should be part of the baseline monitoring plan and what should be identified as additional over target opportunities.

Delaney identified the following impacts of the LTRMP restructuring in FY 00:

- Six full-time, part-time, or seasonal state LTRMP field station employees will be terminated to save \$300,000.

- Eighteen full-time, part-time, student, or university LTRMP employees associated with UMESC will be terminated or transferred to non-LTRMP duties.
- Operating funds for publications, the water quality lab, cartography, and land cover/land use work will be reduced.
- Sediment and bathymetric surveys will be eliminated from the baseline program.
- Administrative functions will be consolidated.

According to Delaney, UMESC's data analysis capabilities will actually decrease in FY 00. However, the combined savings associated with the staff reductions and operating budget cuts identified above are expected to free some additional funds in FY 01 to increase data analysis. Delaney emphasized that this restructuring plan alone will not permit the level of data analysis, synthesis, and reporting needed. According to Delaney, additional program consolidation and restructuring will be necessary at UMESC, in part to prepare for an expanded LTRMP under the new program authority. The FY 00 annual work plan will include more details regarding program reductions and the products and services that can be expected under the restructured LTRMP.

Foley asked whether data analysis could be expanded if additional money were provided early in FY 00. Delaney said this would be possible if USGS used contract employees to do the analysis. Delaney also identified unmet equipment needs as another candidate for over target funding. Moe urged that additional FY 00 money be used to preserve the monitoring effort.

Delaney reported that UMESC's monitoring program oversight and coordination, formerly consolidated under Ken Lubinski, is being divided between a terrestrial group and an aquatic group. Lubinski's responsibilities will shift to using other funds to expand on the concept of the six ecosystem health criteria introduced in the Status and Trends Report. In response to a question from Farabee, Delaney said it has not yet been decided to whom the field station team leaders will report under the new structure. Delaney said team leaders should continue reporting under the current structure until instructed to do otherwise.

Farabee noted that this is a difficult time for the LTRMP and expressed hope that things will improve in future years with expansion under the new program authority. He urged program partners to begin designing the second generation LTRMP. Moe expressed concern regarding the Corps' vision for baseline monitoring in FY 01 and beyond. Rhodes said the Corps' vision rests on the principles articulated by General Anderson in his restructuring directive. Citing the House Appropriations Committee's report on the Corps' FY 00 appropriations, Rhodes said Congress is emphasizing the Corps' traditional missions. According to Rhodes, appropriators are concerned that funding for new missions, including environmental programs, is coming at the expense of flood control, navigation, and other traditional roles. Given this concern, Rhodes emphasized the importance of structuring the EMP as a flexible, responsive program. In answer to a question from Skalak, Rhodes said the EMP should be structured as a flexible program with an \$18 million baseline until such time as there is evidence of increased appropriations. Given the overall fiscal climate, Rhodes said it will be a challenge to maintain current funding and said program supporters will have to work very hard to achieve increased appropriations.

Information Needs Assessment

In response to a question from Delaney, Foley said the cost, funding source, and schedule for the INA have yet to be determined. Delaney said that the costs of the INA should be allocated proportionately between HREPs and LTRMP, as is being done with the HNA.

Skalak presented an overhead showing the interrelationships and feedback among different river management functions and information needs. He emphasized the need to integrate the INA into other efforts, including the HNA. Skalak also presented a potential INA organizational plan, under which the USGS and St. Paul District would serve as co-leads of the INA technical team(s). The co-leads would coordinate with the UMRBA and MVD and would report to the Rock Island District.

Skalak proposed the following basic steps for the INA:

- Establish a project framework using a five to six member multi-agency team.
- Develop a comprehensive matrix of existing data and information.
- Identify and verify the scales of data and information needed for river management.
- Identify gaps between the identified needs and existing data and information.
- Develop plans, including timeframes and cost estimates, for filling the information gaps.

Rhodes noted that the INA has been under discussion for some time and called on Skalak to present basic INA alternatives, including descriptions and cost estimates, at the November EMP-CC meeting. Kevin Szcodronski questioned whether an INA is needed. Bill Bertrand said the HNA will help identify data gaps and suggested waiting to initiate the INA until after the HNA is complete. Jon Duyvejonck noted that state managers and others have been asked about their information needs several times as part of the LTRMP. He said any INA should build upon, rather than duplicate, these past efforts. Rhodes said that the INA alternatives presented to the EMP-CC in November will include the option of not doing an INA.

Moe and Szcodronski questioned the need for an INA unless there is a reasonable expectation for an expanded baseline monitoring program in the future. Delaney concurred with Rhodes' earlier observations regarding the challenge of increasing appropriations for the EMP. Delaney said program supporters will need to offer compelling reasons for funding increases and suggested that the systemic identification of habitat opportunities and information needs may help support such funding requests. Szcodronski asked whether the A-Team should be requested to identify LTRMP ramp-up alternatives, including what the program could look like under various funding levels. Rhodes said such an exercise would be premature and suggested revisiting the question after the first of the year. By that point, Rhodes said the FY 00 appropriations question will be resolved and the restructuring plan will have been implemented.

LTRMP Showcase

Bob Delaney explained that USGS asked the field stations to inventory their non-LTRMP funded activities as a way of demonstrating the ways in which LTRMP money leverages other funding sources to support complementary work. Bob Hrabik said the six field stations are all involved in many partnerships and engage in a wide range of work in addition to their LTRMP monitoring. He noted that these management support activities range from pure research efforts to assisting with field tasks such as banding waterfowl. Hrabik explained that the field stations took somewhat different approaches in responding to USGS's inquiry. As a result, direct comparisons among the field stations are somewhat difficult. Overall, the identified management support activities broke down into the following categories:

Fisheries	24%
Water Quality	21%
Invertebrates	16%
Vegetation	16%
Ecology	7%
Other	18%

Hrabik said the balance and diversity of these activities clearly demonstrates that the field stations are not overly focused on any single resource category. With respect to spatial patterns, Hrabik said the southern field stations tend to do more fisheries-related work while the northern stations have been more active with water quality and vegetation projects. Looking at the management support activities in terms of project design, Hrabik said he found the following distribution:

Research	42%
Expanded monitoring	55%
Other	3%

Hrabik said he suspects that most field stations underreported activities in the "other" category. He also noted that the Illinois Natural History Survey's two stations tended to do more research projects than the other field stations. In terms of project sponsor, the activities broke down as follows:

State	66%
Federal or multi-agency	24%
UMESC	10%

Hrabik said the trend in recent years is for the field stations to work more with federal agencies and multi-agency efforts. In response to a question from Dusty Rhodes, Hrabik said he believes there is good potential for the field stations to work more with universities and other agencies and said the stations are pursuing such opportunities more actively. Mike Steuck noted that Iowa's state system makes it difficult for the Bellevue station to bring in outside money. In response to a question from Jim Harrison, Hrabik said the field stations' ability to increase their LTRMP data analysis efforts is limited in the short term, particularly in light of staff reductions from restructuring. However, over the longer term, Hrabik said he believes the field stations are quite interested in expanding their data analysis role.

Hrabik then briefly highlighted three projects to provide a sense of the field stations' management support activities. The Onalaska field station cooperated with USGS to monitor vegetation response to the experimental drawdown of Lizzy Paul's Pond in Pool 5. The monitoring documented beneficial response, including an increase in vegetation diversity and the growth of emergents. Hrabik said these findings will help managers throughout the system who are looking at the potential for pool-level drawdowns. The Bellevue field station used LTRMP monitoring methods to identify key sub-basin sources of sediment and nutrients to the Maquoketa River. The multi-agency partnership involved in the Maquoketa River Alliance then sent fliers to landowners seeking participants in cost-shared conservation measures. The Cape Girardeau field station has conducted taxonomic research on a type of minnow at several locations on the mainstem Mississippi and its tributaries. This research has clarified that some of the populations studied represent distinct species. Hrabik said he is conducting DNA analysis to support differentiation among these species.

Acknowledging the difficult budget situation facing the field stations, Jim Fisher said the Fish and Wildlife Service may be able to assist by providing additional personnel and boats upon occasion to support monitoring efforts. Hrabik welcomed this possibility.

Other Business

Holly Stoerker announced that the autumn EMP-CC meeting will be held November 18, 1999 in St. Louis. [Note: That date was subsequently changed to November 16.] The winter meeting is scheduled for February 17, 2000 and the spring meeting for May 18, 2000.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 1:30 p.m.