

*Enhancing Restoration and Advancing Knowledge
of the Upper Mississippi River*

A GUIDING DOCUMENT FOR IMPLEMENTING THE
STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE
UPPER MISSISSIPPI RIVER RESTORATION PROGRAM
2015 – 2025



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PREAMBLE

Purpose

On November 19, 2014, the Upper Mississippi River Restoration (UMRR) Coordinating Committee endorsed the 2015-2025 UMRR Strategic Plan, and agreed to convene an operational planning team to identify implementation actions necessary to best achieve the Strategic Plan's goals and objectives. Those actions are presented in the goal tables in this document and will serve as a guiding framework for implementing the Strategic Plan. This operational plan will facilitate coordination among partners and provide for consistent implementation approaches, while still allowing for innovation and flexibility. Through this plan, UMRR partners should be able to identify how they will contribute to achieving the program's goals and objectives, as well as overall mission and vision. The UMRR Coordinating Committee will consider implementation strategies throughout the Strategic Plan's duration.

Annual Scopes of Work

UMRR develops annual scopes of work for its habitat restoration, long term resource monitoring, and science work. In consultation with the UMRR Coordinating Committee, program managers and staff will use the operational plan to further refine tasks and set objectives for each fiscal year. The scopes of work will provide specific direction for each fiscal year, connecting directly to the Strategic Plan through the operational plan. Individual habitat project timelines and administrative factors, as well as research frameworks, will continue to serve as tools for developing the annual scopes of work.

The 2015-2025 Strategic Plan, and the implementation actions identified in this operational document, envisions a fully integrated restoration and science program that efficiently and effectively creates a healthier and more resilient Upper Mississippi River ecosystem. This approach calls for continued growth in the program's restoration and scientific capabilities and enhanced communication and coordination internally and with external partners throughout the watershed. The operational plan includes actions that will be new, additional work for the program and will require additional resources to be implemented. The annual scopes of work will sequence the actions that will lead to achieving this 10-year vision, considering administrative factors (e.g., appropriations and staffing availability) and various dynamics for optimal implementation such as necessary restoration learning opportunities and the development of analytical tools.

UMRR's Interagency Coordination Mechanisms

Through interagency consultative and coordination bodies, the program partnership works together to consider and address a range of program policy and budget issues, define program priorities and direction, and raise and resolve technical questions. Habitat projects are selected, planned, and designed in a collaborative manner among project planners, engineers, habitat managers, and scientists. Long term resource monitoring, research, and analysis are implemented in coordination among the program's partners. The UMRR Joint Charter for the program's advisory groups describes the roles and responsibilities of the UMRR Coordinating Committee, Analysis Team, and Habitat Planning and Sequencing Framework Teams. The Charter is available at: http://www.mvr.usace.army.mil/Portals/48/docs/Environmental/EMP/HREP/EMP_Documents/EMP-CC%20A-Team%20HPSF%20Charter%20combined%205-15-13.pdf

This operational planning team recognized the value of the interagency, interdisciplinary Corps District river teams in providing an appropriate forum for partners to identify site-specific habitat restoration

needs per UMRR that will advance ecological goals and objectives at larger spatial scales. The operational planning team recommends that UMRR utilize the four river teams to discuss concepts related to habitat project selection, design, evaluation, and lessons learned from innovative restoration approaches. The river teams will be convened jointly to consider how habitat projects are selected and designed to best restore the Upper Mississippi River System's ecological health and resilience, as well as to identify scientific investigation needs to inform restoration placement and design. In addition, UMRR's restoration practitioners and scientists are formally convened biennially in-person to exchange information and discuss program priorities and implementation.

Operational Plan Format

The Operational Planning Team gave considerable thought to the level of detail and organization of this operational plan. There is a delicate balance between providing enough guidance for achieving the Strategic Plan's goals and objectives while not being overly prescriptive so that flexibility and innovation in program implementation is encouraged. The plan is organized via tables for each Strategic Plan goal and then at a categorical level relating to the goal's objectives. Next, implementing needs associated with each category are described, and implementing actions necessary to achieve the respective need are identified. The operational plan was built directly from the Strategic Plan's goals and objectives, and therefore the operational goal tables must be referenced with the Plan. This operational plan integrates excerpts of the respective Strategic Plan goal and objectives.

Coordinating leads are the "points-of-contact" or parties responsible for organizing partner coordination in implementing the actions as well as for completing, and reporting to program partners about, the actions. Action contributors are the individuals, organizations, or interagency groups directly involved in implementing the actions. The coordination entities are those individuals, organizations, or interagency groups that serve in an advisory role for the associated actions.

2015-2025 UMRR Strategic Plan: Goal 1

GOAL 1

ENHANCE HABITAT FOR RESTORING AND MAINTAINING A HEALTHIER AND MORE RESILIENT UPPER MISSISSIPPI RIVER ECOSYSTEM

- Objective 1.1** **Address key ecological needs at various spatial scales through habitat projects that reflect best available knowledge and advance UMRR’s vision**
- Strategy 1 Identify and select habitat projects that will most effectively and efficiently advance UMRR’s vision, utilizing an interagency, science-driven, systemic planning approach
 - Strategy 2 Plan, design, and construct habitat projects to best, and most efficiently, address their defined objectives and advance the UMRR’s vision, using structural and non-structural measures and considering ecological benefits at various spatial scales
 - Strategy 3 Perform operation and maintenance on UMRR’s habitat projects to ensure key features are working properly and effectively advancing the projects’ goals and UMRR’s vision
- Objective 1.2** **Apply adaptive management principles to address risk and uncertainty and continually enhance restoration and knowledge of the Upper Mississippi River ecosystem**
- Strategy 1 Refine and implement a framework to operationalize UMRR’s adaptive management efforts, including when and how to apply certain adaptive management techniques and documenting, communicating, and integrating the results and conclusions
 - Strategy 2 Apply monitoring and adaptive management principles to set learning objectives (for select projects), adjust project designs based on ecological models, evaluate the ecological responses to project features, modify constructed project features if not performing as intended or to enhance effectiveness, assess operation and maintenance activities, and enhance future restoration efforts
 - Strategy 3 Employ deliberate and explicit adaptive management analyses (hypothesis testing) using selected habitat projects to explore priority science questions or learning objectives and evaluate the effects of UMRR’s restoration efforts on the Upper Mississippi River ecosystem’s health and resilience
 - Strategy 4 Communicate and integrate learned information into future restoration alternatives and scientific investigations to guide and optimize UMRR’s investment in enhancing restoration and knowledge of the Upper Mississippi River ecosystem

GOAL 1

**ENHANCE HABITAT FOR RESTORING AND MAINTAINING
A HEALTHIER AND MORE RESILIENT UPPER MISSISSIPPI RIVER ECOSYSTEM**

Objective	Category	Needs	Actions	Coordinating Lead ¹	Action Contributors ¹	Coordination Entities ¹
Strategic Plan Objective 1.1	A) Selection	1) Identify habitat opportunities based on their potential contribution to increasing the UMR ecosystem's health and resilience	a) Update and expand the Habitat Needs Assessment to identify habitat enhancement and protection opportunities b) Incorporate insights gained from partner expertise and the UMRR Environmental Design Handbook c) Utilize best available science d) Consult UMRR science experts e) Use existing, or develop new, analytical tools (e.g., models) f) Involve project sponsors in identifying and formulating projects	USACE	District ecological teams; System Ecological Team; Candidate project sponsors Actions c-e: UMESC; Field stations	Key individuals and organizations; General public
		2) Consider state and federal agencies' UMR-related plans and strategies (watershed and in-river)	a) Define a process for incorporating UMR-related habitat plans and strategies b) Develop a reference list of UMR-related habitat plans and strategies (e.g., Landscape Conservation Cooperatives, state wildlife action plans) c) Document and communicate the incorporation of any such ancillary plans and strategies	USFWS	District ecological teams; System Ecological Team; Project sponsors; Project delivery teams	Relevant program/project leads

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Objective	Category	Needs	Actions	Coordinating Lead ¹	Action Contributors ¹	Coordination Entities ¹
Strategic Plan Objective 1.1		3) Ensure proper coordination among all program partners and relevant experts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Update the Habitat Planning and Sequencing Framework, including ways to more formally involve key individuals and organizations (e.g., UMRR scientists, nonprofit organizations) b) Use the Habitat Planning and Sequencing Framework to guide interagency coordination and decision-making 	USACE	UMRR Coordinating Committee	Program partners; Key individuals and organizations (e.g., District river teams, nonprofits)
		4) Maintain flexibility in sequencing projects to optimize execution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Consider administrative factors, such as availability of resources and a project sponsor, regional needs, learning opportunities, and other issues supported by the partnership and so on 	USACE	UMRR Coordinating Committee; District ecological teams; Project sponsors	
	B) Planning and Design	1) Design project features to most effectively advance project goals and objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Incorporate insights gained from partner expertise and the UMRR Environmental Design Handbook b) Utilize best available science c) Consult UMRR science experts where appropriate d) Use existing, or develop new analytical tools; use tools that can also be used in project evaluation e) Continue to innovate project design and construction f) Define appropriate temporal and spatial scales for determining physical and biotic response of habitat project objectives 	USACE	Project sponsors; Project delivery teams; UMESC; Field stations	

Objective	Category	Needs	Actions	Coordinating Lead ¹	Action Contributors ¹	Coordination Entities ¹
Strategic Plan Objective 1.1		2) Develop analytical tools to better estimate future conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Describe any new modeling needs for the UMRR b) Identify required expertise c) Form working groups containing said expertise d) Develop and evaluate models 	USACE and UMESC	Project delivery teams; Component specialists; Field station scientists	
		3) Engage public interests and seek their input	a) Implement the Communications Plan and Implementation Framework (see Goal 3)	USACE	Communications Team; Project delivery teams	
	C) Operation and Maintenance	1) Perform operation and maintenance to ensure key features are effectively advancing project goals and objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Seek adequate resources to implement operation and maintenance b) Improve reporting operation and maintenance costs and activities into the individual project evaluation reports and the UMRR Database c) Conduct project evaluation reports in five or ten years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Project sponsors b) USACE c) Project sponsors and USACE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Project sponsors b) USACE c) Project sponsors and USACE 	
		2) Evaluate options to better enable project sponsors to completely and effectively implement operation and maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Incorporate lessons learned about operation and maintenance needs of various restoration techniques b) Design project features to reduce operation and maintenance costs, while also minimizing first construction costs 	USACE	Project sponsors; Project delivery teams	

Objective	Category	Needs	Actions	Coordinating Lead ¹	Action Contributors ¹	Coordination Entities ¹
Strategic Plan Objectives 1.1 and 1.2	A) Partner Coordination	Enhance and formalize interagency and interdisciplinary coordination and dialogue about habitat project planning, techniques, and adaptive management, among other things	a) Hold annual in-person meetings of the UMRS Corps district river teams and occasional conference calls when appropriate b) Conduct at least one annual information exchange meeting between UMRR scientists and restoration practitioners; biennial meetings held in-person c) Develop and maintain a habitat project status summary that includes reference to critical decision points for project development and adaptive management	USACE	USFWS; States; UMESC; Analysis Team Chair; River Team Chairs	
	B) Integration	Enhance integration among the program's various restoration and science efforts	a) Facilitate the inclusion of health and resilience concepts and applications into all aspects of the program b) Enhance internal communications and coordination among all partners (see Goal 4) c) Evaluate where better guidance would help restoration practitioners optimize and appropriately utilize the long term resource monitoring database	USACE; UMESC	All program partners	

Objective	Category	Needs	Actions	Coordinating Lead ¹	Action Contributors ¹	Coordination Entities ¹
Strategic Plan Objectives 1.1 and 1.2	C) Database	Centralize databases of project monitoring and evaluation data and other habitat project information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Input habitat project monitoring data and insights gained into a central database that is publically accessible b) Standardize database inputs of project goals, objectives, planning area, project area, project assessments, models uses, and features (e.g., project as-builts) 	USACE	Project sponsors	
	D) Data Integrity	Ensure project monitoring methods are consistent through time and among projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Review any supplemental, external data to ensure high quality b) Document methods used in all project monitoring 	USACE	All partners	
Strategic Plan Objective 1.2	Operationalizing Adaptive Management ²	1) Operationalize and focus UMRR's adaptive management efforts in an implementation framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Consider when and how to apply certain adaptive management techniques b) Develop a system for documenting and communicating results and conclusions c) Notify partners when habitat project performance reports are published d) Create a central database for habitat project monitoring data that is accessible to all partners e) Integrate results and conclusions in future habitat projects to gain efficiencies f) Estimate and communicate the efficiencies gained through learning 	USACE	UMRR Coordinating Committee; Analysis Team; Project delivery teams; Component specialists; Field station scientists	

² The UMRR Coordinating Committee approved two flow diagrams describing the program's adaptive management approaches, at the project scale as well as broader hypothesis testing. These flow charts are available at: [web site coming soon.]

Objective	Category	Needs	Actions	Coordinating Lead ¹	Action Contributors ¹	Coordination Entities ¹
<p align="center">Strategic Plan Objective 1.2</p>			<p>g) Use a habitat project to examine adaptive management implementation questions</p> <p>h) Document and communicate the value of learning, including monetizing efficiencies gained</p>			
		<p>2) Implement, and refine as needed, the UMRR's adaptive management framework</p>	<p>a) Establish connections among habitat project planners and scientists</p>	<p>USACE; UMESC</p>	<p>UMRR Coordinating Committee; Analysis Team; Project delivery teams; Component specialists; Field station scientists</p>	
		<p>3) Identify important science questions regarding the UMR ecosystem that can be tested at completed and/or future habitat projects (Strategy 3)</p>	<p>a) Define and sequence critical ecological uncertainties at various spatial scales</p> <p>b) Develop and use standardized habitat project monitoring protocols to the extent possible</p> <p>c) Include potential learning opportunities in project fact sheets and feasibility reports</p>	<p>USACE; UMESC</p>	<p>UMRR Coordinating Committee; Analysis Team; Project delivery teams; Component specialists; Field station scientists</p>	

2015-2025 UMRR Strategic Plan: Goal 2

GOAL 2

ADVANCE KNOWLEDGE FOR RESTORING AND MAINTAINING A HEALTHIER AND MORE RESILIENT UPPER MISSISSIPPI RIVER ECOSYSTEM

- Objective 2.1** **Assess, and detect changes in, the fundamental health and resilience of the Upper Mississippi River ecosystem by continuing to monitor and evaluate its key ecological components of aquatic vegetation, bathymetry, fish, land use/land cover, and water quality**
- Strategy 1 Evaluate the Upper Mississippi River’s ecological status and trends through comprehensive, integrated analyses of key ecological indicators using UMRR’s long term data
- Strategy 2 Conduct scientific analysis, research, and modeling using UMRR’s long term data, and any necessary supplemental data, to gain knowledge about the Upper Mississippi River ecosystem status and trends and process, function, structure, and composition
- Strategy 3 Continue to improve the effectiveness of long term data collection, analysis, storage, and dissemination to maintain the data’s integrity, long-term consistency, relevance, and usability¹
- Strategy 4 Evaluate additional ecological components as priorities and resources allow to gain an even broader understanding of the Upper Mississippi River ecosystem and expand possibilities for important scientific analyses
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- Objective 2.2** **Provide critical insights and understanding regarding a range of key ecological questions through a combination of monitoring, additional research, and modeling in order to inform and improve management and restoration of the Upper Mississippi River ecosystem**
- Strategy 1 Conduct focused research and analyses to gain critical, management-relevant information about the Upper Mississippi River ecosystem’s process, function, structure, and composition as well as the dynamics and interactions among system components
- Strategy 2 Conduct research projects that improve our understanding of critical ecological conditions and processes by examining the effects of select habitat restoration projects on those conditions and processes
- Strategy 3 Utilize other information, as needed, to augment UMRR’s long term data sets for comprehensive analyses of the river’s health and resilience
- Strategy 4 Develop and improve ecological models and other decision support tools to enhance science capabilities and understandings, and improve understanding of the potential effects of future management actions
- Strategy 5 Effectively communicate to habitat project planners and managers regarding how research findings may be applied to habitat projects

¹ More information on the long term resource monitoring sampling effort and statistics can be found at <http://www.umesc.usgs.gov/ltrmp.html>.

GOAL 2

**ADVANCE KNOWLEDGE FOR RESTORING AND MAINTAINING
A HEALTHIER AND MORE RESILIENT UPPER MISSISSIPPI RIVER ECOSYSTEM**

Objective	Category	Needs	Actions	Coordinating Lead ¹	Action Contributors ¹	Coordination Entities ¹
<p>Strategic Plan Objective 2.1</p>	<p>Assessing Ecosystem Health and Resilience</p>	<p>1) Apply resilience concepts to UMRR implementation</p>	<p>a) Identify UMR ecosystem resilience definitions based on conceptual models, focused research, and public input b) Develop conceptual models for applying resilience concepts to the UMR c) Use the conceptual models to guide development of indices of resilience and evaluation of connections between restoration efforts and resilience d) Consult UMR restoration experts e) Test hypotheses derived from conceptual models through focused research and monitoring of habitat projects</p>	<p>UMESC</p>	<p>Component leads; Field station staff; Analysis Team; Restoration practitioners; Project sponsors</p>	<p>UMRR Coordinating Committee</p>

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Objective	Category	Needs	Actions	Coordinating Lead ¹	Action Contributors ¹	Coordination Entities ¹
<p>Strategic Plan Objective 2.1</p>	<p>Assessing Ecosystem Health and Resilience</p>	<p>2) Assess and detect changes in UMR ecosystem health and resilience</p>	<p>a) Continue long term resource monitoring, including land cover/land use every ten years b) Use the long term resource monitoring data and analysis for assessment purposes c) Refine definitions of indicators of ecological health d) Evaluate the status and trends of indicators of ecological health and resilience at appropriate scales (Status and Trends Report and other publications) e) Maintain the long term resource monitoring database in order ensure its availability to the public in perpetuity f) Evaluate effects of selected restoration techniques and approaches on selected indicators of ecological health and resilience at appropriate scales</p>	<p>Action a-c: UMESC; State field stations</p> <p>Actions d-f: UMESC; Field stations Analysis Team Chair; USACE</p>	<p>Component leads; Field station staff; Analysis Team; Restoration practitioners</p>	<p>UMRR Coordinating Committee</p>

Objective	Category	Needs	Actions	Coordinating Lead ¹	Action Contributors ¹	Coordination Entities ¹
		3) Conduct scientific analysis, research, and modeling to gain knowledge about the UMR's ecological health and resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Develop research frameworks that link science monitoring, research, analyses, and where appropriate, restoration efforts b) Consult with UMR restoration practitioners as appropriate c) Identify additional monitoring components needed to better understanding key ecological processes, functions, structures, and composition d) Continue to develop novel, informative, analytical methods for understanding the health and resilience of the UMR e) Use existing, or develop new, analytical tools (e.g., models) 	UMESC; Field station leaders	Component leads; Field station staff; Analysis Team; Restoration practitioners; Project sponsors	UMRR Coordinating Committee

Objective	Category	Needs	Actions	Coordinating Lead ¹	Action Contributors ¹	Coordination Entities ¹
Strategic Plan Objectives 2.1 and 2.2	A) Integration	Enhance integration among the program's various restoration and science efforts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> d) Facilitate the inclusion of health and resilience concepts and applications into all aspects of the program e) Improve internal communications and coordination (see Goal 4) f) Provide learning sessions regarding accessibility and usability of the database g) Facilitate the appropriate use of available data in habitat project planning and evaluation by improving communication between restoration practitioners and UMRR scientists h) Evaluate where better guidance would help restoration practitioners optimize and appropriately utilize the long term resource monitoring database 	USACE; UMESC	Component leads; Field station staff; Analysis Team; Restoration practitioners; Project sponsors; Project delivery teams	
	B) Data Integrity	1) Ensure methods remain consistent through time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Field stations and UMESC LTRM PIs meet in-person regularly to ensure consistency in methods b) Hold biennial component meetings 	UMESC; State field stations	UMESC; State field stations	
Strategic Plan Objective 2.2	Knowledge to Improve and Inform UMR Ecosystem Management and Restoration	1) Address restoration and UMR ecosystem management questions through science analysis and research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Continue to develop novel, informative, analytical methods for understanding the health and resilience of the UMR b) Identify and better understand current and emerging stressors (or drivers) to the UMR ecological health and resilience 	UMESC	Component leads; Field station staff; Analysis Team; Restoration practitioners; Project sponsors	
		2) Continue improvement of management actions and restoration approaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Conduct well-designed studies of select habitat projects and management actions that examine their effects in the context of ecological health and resilience b) Define appropriate temporal and spatial scales for determining physical and biotic response of habitat project objectives 	USACE; UMESC	Component leads; Field station staff; Analysis Team; Restoration practitioners; Project sponsors	

Objective	Category	Needs	Actions	Coordinating Lead¹	Action Contributors¹	Coordination Entities¹
Strategic Plan Objective 2.2	Knowledge to Improve and Inform UMR Ecosystem Management and Restoration	3) Effectively communicate relevant research findings to habitat project planners and river managers	a) See Goal 4 for interactions between science- and habitat-related implementing partners b) Distribute clear, concise summaries of scientific findings to program partners	UMESC; USACE	Component leads; Field station staff; Analysis Team; Restoration practitioners; Project sponsors	

2015-2025 UMRR Strategic Plan: Goal 3

GOAL 3

ENGAGE AND COLLABORATE WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS TO HELP ACCOMPLISH THE UPPER MISSISSIPPI RIVER RESTORATION VISION

- Objective 3.1 Work with key organizations and individuals in the Upper Mississippi River watershed**
- Strategy 1 Ensure rich collaboration with key organizations and individuals in the Upper Mississippi River watershed in advancing complementary visions, missions, and goals
 - Strategy 2 With key watershed programs and projects, jointly develop and communicate common messages about the restoration and knowledge needs of the Upper Mississippi River
 - Strategy 3 Seek knowledge from other organizations and individuals for the purposes of being aware of activities that may influence UMRR's work and enhancing programmatic efforts
 - Strategy 4 Directly engage relevant organizations or individuals in implementing UMRR's efforts, as appropriate
- Objective 3.2 Provide information to organizations and individuals whose actions and decisions affect the Upper Mississippi River ecosystem**
- Strategy 1 Enhance the delivery and utility of UMRR's knowledge in order to increase understanding of the Upper Mississippi River's ecosystem drivers and means to achieve the UMRR vision
 - Strategy 2 Provide decision makers with timely, relevant, understandable, and usable knowledge about the needs and tools available to advance the UMRR's vision
- Objective 3.3 Exchange knowledge with other organizations and individuals nationally and internationally**
- Strategy 1 Serve as a resource for similar programs nationally and internationally
 - Strategy 2 Seek knowledge from other organizations and individuals nationally and internationally to enhance UMRR's efforts in advancing its vision

GOAL 3

ENGAGE AND COLLABORATE WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS TO HELP ACCOMPLISH THE UPPER MISSISSIPPI RIVER RESTORATION VISION

Objective	Category	Needs	Actions	Coordinating Lead ¹	Action Contributors ¹	Coordination Entities ¹
Strategic Plan Objectives 3.1, 3.2, and 3.3	Communications Plan	Coordinate and commit resources to UMRR's external engagement and outreach	a) Establish a standing communications team to implement Goal 3	UMRR Coordinating Committee		All partners
		Develop a UMRR external communications plan	a) Focus external outreach efforts based on prioritized ecological drivers that affect the Upper Mississippi River ecosystem health b) Assess external users' information and engagement needs and preferred delivery methods c) UMRR Coordinating Committee and A-Team agendas regularly include opportunities to discuss outreach and external engagement ideas d) Review and update UMRR web sites at least quarterly	UMRR Communications Team		UMRR Coordinating Committee; All partners
Strategic Plan Objective 3.1	Strategic Engagement and Outreach (Collaborating with others to optimize and leverage UMRR's resources)	Focus and enhance engagement and collaboration and dialogue in a communications plan and implementation framework	a) Identify key organizations and individuals to directly engage and seek knowledge b) Assess information and engagement needs of key organizations and individuals c) Determine preferred information delivery methods of key organizations and individuals	UMRR Communication Team; USACE; UMESC	UMRR Communication Team; Partner agencies' public affairs specialists and congressional liaisons; Select partners	UMRR Coordinating Committee

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Objective	Category	Needs	Actions	Coordinating Lead ¹	Action Contributors ¹	Coordination Entities ¹
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> d) Develop compelling messages and various tools for communicating with key audiences (See Objective 3.2 actions) e) Prioritize external engagement and collaboration f) Create collaborative exchanges with other basin restoration programs to improve outcomes for all programs, especially NRCS-RCPP, and potentially USEPA g) Promote both program elements and develop a message that conveys the value of their integration 		<p>with program knowledge; Target watershed and instream program, project, initiative leads</p>	

Objective	Category	Needs	Actions	Coordinating Lead ¹	Action Contributors ¹	Coordination Entities ¹
<p>Strategic Plan Objective 3.2</p>	<p>External Communication and Dialogue (Outreach to public, elected officials, etc.)</p>	<p>Focus and enhance external communication in a communications plan and implementation framework</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Facilitate dialogue to solicit public input on Goals 1 and 2 implementation (e.g., habitat project planning, resilience concepts) b) Develop compelling messages and tools (e.g., brochures) for communicating with key audiences c) Utilize innovative technologies/communicating mechanisms to better reach audiences (e.g., instagram) d) Develop concise, overarching messages about UMRR’s accomplishments and programmatic efforts (i.e., “elevator speech”) e) Make available current talking points f) Develop directory of partner expertise to reference specific inquiries g) Address challenges with crediting the program in short sound bites h) Share internally (within the program) about upcoming public engagement opportunities i) Promote both program elements and the value of their integration j) Evaluate effectiveness in external communications and dialogue k) Track significant successes in outreach techniques 	<p>UMRR Communication Team; USACE; UMESC</p>	<p>UMRR Communication Team; Partner agencies’ public affairs specialists and congressional liaisons; Select partners with program knowledge</p>	<p>UMRR Coordinating Committee</p>

Objective	Category	Needs	Actions	Coordinating Lead ¹	Action Contributors ¹	Coordination Entities ¹
Strategic Plan Objective 3.3	National and International Exchanges	Focus and enhance knowledge exchange with other organizations and individuals nationally and internationally in a communications plan and implementation framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Target distribution of key materials as appropriate b) Collaborate with other related large aquatic ecosystem/water resources efforts in the nation and world c) Incorporate insights gained from other national and international programs/efforts as applicable to enhance program implementation, increase knowledge, and create cost-efficiencies, and so on d) Promote the program’s national and international significance 	USACE; UMESC	Partner agencies’ public affairs specialists; UMRR-affiliated personnel attending conferences, etc.; Program experts and knowledgeable partners that can promote program success	UMRR Coordinating Committee

2015-2025 UMRR Strategic Plan: Goal 4

GOAL 4

UTILIZE A STRONG, INTEGRATED PARTNERSHIP TO ACCOMPLISH THE UPPER MISSISSIPPI RIVER RESTORATION VISION

- Objective 4.1** **Promote a common vision and sense of purpose, transparency, and accountability among UMRR partners**
- Strategy 1 Partners carry a strong, unified message regarding UMRR’s value, accomplishments, and importance to the region and nation
 - Strategy 2 Partners work in collaboration to enhance restoration and knowledge of the Upper Mississippi River to advance UMRR’s vision
 - Strategy 3 Continually learn and improve as a program and in implementing restoration and science techniques
 - Strategy 4 Improve transparency and accountability within the partnership regarding program priorities and budgets
 - Strategy 5 Organize and maintain institutional knowledge of UMRR’s policy and programmatic efforts
- Objective 4.2** **Implement the UMRR as outlined in the program’s adopted Joint Charter for the UMRR Coordinating Committee, Analysis Team, and Habitat Planning and Sequencing Framework Teams, as well as the FY 2015-2025 UMRR Strategic Plan**
- Strategy 1 Partner agencies implement program activities in accordance to the adopted Joint Charter
 - Strategy 2 Partner agencies collaboratively develop and implement the strategic plan

GOAL 4

**UTILIZE A STRONG, INTEGRATED PARTNERSHIP
TO ACCOMPLISH THE UPPER MISSISSIPPI RIVER RESTORATION VISION**

Objective	Category	Needs	Actions	Coordinating Lead¹	Action Contributors¹	Coordination Entities¹
Strategic Plan Objective 4.1	A) Partnership Vision	Partners communicate compelling and consistent messages about the program to their respective agencies	a) Develop broad unified messages about the value of the program, including the program’s economic value b) Make these messages readily accessible to all UMRR partners for their own uses	Communications team	Staff representatives serving on UMRR’s coordinating groups	UMRR Coordinating Committee
	B) Partner Communication	1) Enhance internal communication among all partners	a) Identify communications needs and solutions b) Hold biennial meetings among restoration and science staff c) Communicate restoration and science knowledge in meaningful, relevant, timely, and useful ways – One page fact sheets, brown bag lunch webinars, etc. d) Develop reports that overview UMRR accomplishments, including partner contributions, and major policy changes	USACE; UMESC	District-based interagency coordinating committee chairs (RRF, FWIG, FWIC, RRCT, RRAT); Component specialists; Field station staff; State and federal natural resource managers	UMRR Coordinating Committee

¹ The Coordinating Lead is the point of contact that is responsible for organizing partner coordination in implementing the task as well as for ultimately completing the actions. The Action Contributors are those individuals or organizations involved in implementing the task. The Coordination Entities are those individuals, organizations, or interagency groups that serve in an advisory role for the associated actions.

Objective	Category	Needs	Actions	Coordinating Lead ¹	Action Contributors ¹	Coordination Entities ¹
Strategic Plan Objective 4.1	B) Partner Communication	2) Maintain, and make readily available, programmatic information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Input habitat project and science information in program databases in a timely manner b) Make databases available to all partners to the extent possible c) Scan and make accessible historic documents and other priority data (e.g., aerial photos) d) Identify UMR historic documents and databases to be made available in electronic formats (i.e., historic fish, mussel and wildlife surveys, water quality data, GREAT studies, etc.) 	USACE; UMESC	Database experts from partner agencies; State and federal natural resource managers; Component leads; Monitoring staff	UMRR Coordinating Committee
Strategic Plan Objectives 4.1 and 4.2	Transparency and Accountability	1) Maintain good, working relationships among partners that foster trust and collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Clearly communicate and coordinate decision-making b) When released to the public, share information about the federal budget process as it relates to UMRR c) Partner agencies provide timely financial information clearly and as appropriate 	USACE; UMESC	UMRR Coordinating Committee; Field station staff; USFWS; UMESC staff; Habitat project PDTs	All partners
		2) Provide relevant and timeline information necessary to allow for effective and efficient resource planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Provide partner agencies with timely information about out-year budgets for their respective planning b) Scopes of work and related budget information are shared in a timely manner to assist in budget developments 	USACE; UMESC	Project managers; Partners with Congressional involvement; Field stations	All partners

Objective	Category	Needs	Actions	Coordinating Lead ¹	Action Contributors ¹	Coordination Entities ¹
<p>Strategic Plan Objective 4.2</p>	<p>Partner Coordination</p>	<p>Ensure all partners are provided with information needed to implement UMRR as described in program planning documents</p>	<p>a) Members of coordinating teams provide respective agency staff with updates on policies and program implementation</p> <p>b) Create and maintain a directory and organizational chart of individuals who work directly in implementing the program</p> <p>c) Encourage and facilitate engagement among UMRR's interagency coordinating groups</p> <p>d) Facilitate more frequent exchanges between UMRR partners and various coordinating entities, including restoration practitioners, scientists, the A-Team, and river teams</p>	<p>USACE; UMESC</p>	<p>Habitat project PDTs; State and federal natural resource managers; LTRMP staff; Corps project managers</p>	<p>All partners</p>