Analysis Team Conference Call

February 21, 2014

Participants: Barry Johnson, Jennie Sauer, Sara Strassman, Jeff Houser, Jim Fischer, Rob Maher, Scotty Gritters, Dave Herzog, Quentin Phelps, Nick Schlesser, Marv Hubbell, Karen Hagerty, Chuck Theiling, Kat McCain and Nate Richards

Approval of the April 24, 2013 meeting minutes – After a brief discussion and clarification of language regarding the FY 13 budget update, the minutes were approved.

Approval of the August 26, 2013 conference call minutes - Sara: Had several items to add that she wasn't able to send to Jennie in advance, but thought they should be part of the record. She agreed to send her marked-up notes to Jennie so she can distribute them to the group.

Rob: Table approving the August conference call minutes until Sara's comments can be incorporated.

Marv: FY14 Budget: $32M, is draft and should be reflected officially in the workplan within the first week of March. In anticipation of those funds, the COE has completed contracting for base monitoring (MIPR) and about half the MIPR work for the restoration (3wks ago); remaining work to budgeted ($500K) will be contracted shortly. Projects funded currently: Seamless Elevation ;2nd half of LC/LU; science planning mtg; overwintering in Pool 12; predictive model for aquatic; standardized protocols for forested & non-forested wetland (about 3 weeks ago under new MIPR).
Sara: Interest from our managers in being engaged in models and protocols—how can they get engaged?

Strategic Planning Mtg Update: Marv felt meeting was highly productive, difficult issues were discussed in the 2nd afternoon, which resulted in a lot of progress made—including build consensus around vision statement (Health & Resiliency of the river) and how does our program utilize these as yardsticks? Resiliency: Define & measure, mark progress towards restoration health. (demonstrates value of LTRMP because it marks the progress toward these objectives); last Status & Trends report spent much time on developing metrics to be used to assess Health (Indicators report), feeds back into the active restoration work, which connects to next round of project prioritization for HREPs on the horizon. Much dialogue about program integration within this Vision—this helped unify the strategic planning group around the concept of integration between the two program elements. Name is being solidified as Upper Mississippi River Restoration at next EMP-CC meeting.

April is next meeting—substantial part of plan will be completed by then, which will lead to move into the integration plan, there is a 1-pager in the EMP-CC read ahead packet describing the Vision and the 4 goals

Jim Fisher: The Strategic Planning group has gotten more comfortable with more controversial items within the plan such as the 2:3/1:3 split, new vision, LTRMP + EMP integration, etc, but the broader group needs time to review & respond. He thinks we need an opportunity for feedback from the broader partnership, so we should not consider the plan closed within April. Marv agrees that the partnership needs time to reflect and comment upon what is included and the changes within.

Chuck: Chuck and Elliott have been discussing themes for unifying the River Teams and planning for a joint call in March where the topics of the Strategic Plan could be presented

Jennie: Waterbird Mortality Research—(moved up in the agenda to make sure we have time) Jennie is interested in seeing this framework being added to our official lineup of frameworks; Steve Winter provided a presentation he prepared for IWL so that folks could quickly get up to speed; estimated 70,000 bird deaths, concentrated mainly in pools 7-8; caused by 3 trematodes; states and USFWS are concerned about the potential for catastrophic losses in waterbirds; most highly affected birds are lesser scaup, Am. Widgeon & N. pintail (all are already below their recommended population levels).
The research framework is question-based and is organized around 2 sides of research (snail-trematode and bird-snail). There were priority research needs identified. The program has some flexibility to tackle emerging issues, so it could be incorporated as a framework, but we do have resource constraints with total availability.

<u>Opposition</u>: concerns raised over whether this was too species-specific, whether it's adoption would constitute a commitment on the part of EMP to fund research (this was an intent of the 2009 LTRMP strategic plan), whether it had enough direct relationship with management actions, whether it was timely, whether it spreads research dollars too thin and whether or not the disease side should have any connection with EMP given the prominent wildlife disease center in Madison
<u>In Favor</u>: allows us to get out in front of a potential big issue, would be ready 'on the shelf' as research opportunities arise, allows us to endorse a research template for an issue that others might delve into, is related to a past component on inverts that is an important missing parameter from our current monitoring, ties to waterfowl which is our primary HREP justification species,
<u>Decision:</u> revisit at future meeting. Think this over in light of draft invasive species white paper, Barry's draft science coordination process report, Chuck's proposed dialogues with the River Teams and with regard to whether research frameworks could/should be reports that A-Team endorses on scientific merit without making a commitment to providing funding. We should also consider whether there is a process for reevaluating existing frameworks, adding new ones—if that is by definition the strategic plan process or the science coordination process or something else?

<u>Proposal Discussion:</u>
Rob: We circulated proposals, we might need to review how much money is available, what is our big picture perspective on what we have the capacity to fund. Marv: the target is $1M, we have flexibility based on the quality of our proposals. In light of what we've already committed, we have about $530-560K (which already includes the med-low equipment—Karen recommends that we not fund that proposal, but we do allow funding of WI's airboat) remaining, so we're about $100K shy of funding everything on this list

Low-med Equipment Needs: the WI airboat would be included, but not the other items.
Dave Herzog: thinks they might be OK getting the outboards from their agency,
Jim Fisher: we did have a professional analysis and the industry folks recommended replacement on a 10yr interval especially with airboats used over ice; the costs for repair were way too high—based on that justification, is everyone else OK with only this item moving forward? We don't want to undercut others.

Rob: Is everyone OK moving the WI airboat up and leave the rest unfunded for now?

Marv: Of the remaining proposals, Corps has a few questions, but they think that the proposals are all sound. This would put us just slightly over $1,050,000. The other proposals with outstanding questions to address are the Asian carp proposals.

Missouri Asian Carp: has this been accounted for by all field stations? Are they able to collect stomach evacuations and otoliths with resources currently in their monitoring budgets?
MN & WI note that they may need freezer space to be able to handle the carp.
Quentin—we can provide a freezer to MN, it's just putting them in a bag and freezing them. The gastric evacuation doesn't have to happen in the field, can be done by MO after they are frozen. MO will come collect the fish to avoid shipping costs. MO will address WI freezer needs, if needed.

Marv: So the Corps is comfortable that we can fund everything in front of us now with the removal of the low-medium equipment needs and the inclusion of WI's airboat. Marv is supportive of everything in front of us, if folks address Brian Gray's comments, as needed.

Hydrodynamic Model: Sara asked Chuck how folks could get engaged since this effort appears to cross many potential interest areas and at a minimum, the data mapper folks should be aware of what H&H data is getting compiled/shared through the meeting described in the proposal. Chuck responded that the meetings will probably be set up as a webinar, so other folks can chime in, send invitees to Chuck

Geospatial proposals: Sara asks whether there isn't a better way to fund the large amount of geospatial work since it uses a lot of the proposal funding and is a critical science need supporting HREP design, non-EMP Corps work, EMP communications on the web and LTRMP monitoring program data. It has ongoing costs, particularly when factoring in processing work and seems like it should be part of the base program. Marv answers that the geospatial work being funded now is a catch up on processing from an ARRA-funded investment in systemic data layers and that the work in base is committed to keeping our science needs working, including people's salaries, so if base program shrinks, these elements should continue to be treated within the proposal process

Rob: Is there a Motion to Approve all Proposals, excluding the low-medium equipment and including the WI airboat?

Scottie G: I can make a motion to accept the group of proposals as is, if the field station folks are feeling OK, but still feeling a little unsure
Nick: without Walt here, it's hard to make the determination that the field station folks are OK
Quentin: proposals look good to me
Sara: second Scott G's motion to approve the list

Rob: We don't actually have quorum and we need to make sure field stations aren't obligated to more than what they are capable of doing. Can we make the decision electronically? Can we make the decision prior to next Wednesday's EMP-CC mtg? I will send an email with Scottie G's motion via email and ask folks to check with their field stations, connect with Q (if needed) and send a motion by midday Tuesday.

Karen: when there is a final decision, Karen will develop the milestones since this is science that supports HREPs, she'll work with the PIs to reflect the info, she'll compile any comments that need to go through to the PIs

Time & Place for next meeting: April 23rd, MRRC meeting in La Crosse. Jennie will reserve a room

State Updates:
Minnesota: Pool 9, Capoli is nearly completed. Harper's DPR has been sent to MVD. Alternative formulation briefing in end of March. Meeting of new General at UMESC specifically Asian carp and eDNA. Sturgeon Lake project appraisal.

Wisconsin: John Sullivan is retiring April 4th. Hope to fill his position

UMESC: science meeting last week, Barry will report on it at EMP-CC, retirements—Mike Jawson in April, Barry later 2014

Iowa: Scottie G—long hard winter, will be interesting year for our data set, thank you to the WQ crews, eagle numbers seem to be high at Bellevue. Mel's paper: Evaluating the effectiveness of a mandatory catch and release regulation on a riverine largemouth bass population will be published this spring through the Iowa DNR's Fisheries Management Investigations.

Chuck: Performance evaluation reports (McCartney in review in the office), Mud & Sunfish Lake are also in, Sunfish they are modifying the notches to move fish up, Mud Lake the velocities are too high, they are going to do a dye study with oxygen diffusion and will work on an adaptive management (may include leaky riprap, or gated structures)—in review with partners right now; will start PER in Chautauqua; Emiquon is moving rapidly after adding to EMP in November, there are a few delays, but the potential construction award may occur in FY16, but TNC awarding some work this year; Corps will also do some repair work at Lake Odessa

Illinois: possible hiring for UMR biologist

Missouri: Kat—Clarence Cannon is in public review, DPR maybe by late April, working on Riprap Landing, pursuing Cypress Slough to move CAP project into EMP, Piasa Eagles Nest—will enter active planning, some planning on wetland project in Illinois River, Ted Shanks construction; Horseshoe Lake switched to EMP

Adjourn 11:15am