

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: River Resources Coordinating Team (RRCT) Meeting Minutes, 17 May 2005

1. A meeting of the River Resources Coordinating Team was held on 17 May 2005, from 12:30 pm to 3:00 pm at the Rock Island District Office, ABC Conference Room. The agenda is included as Attachment 1. The following people were in attendance (in person or by phone):

George Hardison, Corps, Rock Island, OD-T (Co-chair for Kenn Shoemaker)	Jack Carr, Corps, Rock Island, PM-A (for Teresa Kincaid)
Gretchen Benjamin, Wisconsin DNR (Co-chair)	Rebecca Soileau, Corps, St. Paul, EC-H
Jim Mick, Illinois DNR	Scott Whitney, Corps, Rock Island, PM-M
Gary Clark, Illinois DNR	Roger Perk, Corps, Rock Island, PM-M
Bob Schanzle, Illinois DNR	Marshall Plumley, Corps, Rock Island, PM-F
Mike Griffin, Iowa DNR	Jerry Skalak, Corps, Rock Island, PM-M
Janet Sternburg, Missouri Department of Conservation	Mark Cornish, Corps, Rock Island, PM-A
Vicki Stoeller, Upper Mississippi, Illinois and Missouri Rivers Association	Ken Barr, Corps, Rock Island, PM-A
Rick Nelson, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Steve Johnson, Corps, Rock Island, PM-A
	Nicole McVay, Corps, Rock Island, PM-A
	Mike Cox, Corps, Rock Island, OD-T
	Mark Schroeder, Corps, Rock Island, PM-F

2. There were no follow-up items from the previous meeting.

3. Budget Status

Ken Barr provided a status on the Fiscal Year 2005 budget. The President's FY06 budget request was also discussed. There is a potential funding shortfall on the Illinois Waterway and the reservoirs. Reservoirs may each receive approximately \$1 million less than requested. There are potentially serious funding implications for (rehab of) Lock and Dam 11 and Lock 19. The group discussed the implications of applying of regional overhead rates within the Mississippi Valley Division. Rock Island District has the lowest overhead rate of Operations Divisions within MVD, but now will be using the regional overhead rate which is higher. MVR is proceeding with the assumption that there will be a good faith effort to restore funds to districts with low actual overhead costs. Mike Cox noted that the dredging budget for FY05 looks good.

4. Navigation and Ecosystem Sustainability Program (NESP) (Scott Whitney)

a. The Program Management Plan (PgMP) for the Navigation and Ecosystem Sustainability Program (NESP) has been completed and endorsed by all three districts. A considerable number of private sector contracts are being utilized to accomplish the FY05 work, approximately 30% of the FY05 budget. Project Management Plans for NESP ecosystem restoration and navigation projects are being reviewed by team members and will be made available to stakeholders and partners.

b. Gretchen Benjamin asked specifically about the status of the Pool 11 Islands NESP project and the issues with the endangered Higgin's eye mussels in the project area. Gretchen stated that she would like this project to proceed without impacts to the endangered mussels. Additional mussel surveys in the project area will be conducted to further assess potential impacts. The survey design is being coordinated with USFWS, IA DNR and WI DNR. Gretchen asked if there are any other possible NESP island projects out there. Ken Barr stated that there were no other projects as far along in planning. Ken also stated that moving the island complex in Pool 11 would be like starting over which isn't what the COE wants to do.

c. The group discussed the process for setting up Institutional Arrangements for more integrated river management, especially the role played by the River Council to sequence new restoration projects on the river. The draft Institutional Arrangements document was sent to stakeholders for comment. Comments are due 1 June 2005. The RRCT would be involved in the project sequencing and prioritization process. Scott Whitney stated that there are still many institutional arrangements issues to work out before the process would be formally proposed. Scott stated that a meeting on Institution Arrangements is currently being planned for mid July. This meeting would involve designated representatives from the respective state and federal agencies currently charged with river management responsibilities. [UPDATE: This meeting was rescheduled for 20-21 October 2005.]

d. Scott Whitney discussed the need for the state and federal agencies to identify contact lists for the NESP teams to know who to coordinate with and who is the lead. Ken Barr stated that the FWS identified their primary point of contacts for NESP and the states are providing information to Nicole McVay for the correct primary person. Illinois needs to continue to look at how they want to be represented.

e. Scott gave an update on the following NESP Projects:

- L/D 22 lock expansion and fish passage. A public meeting was held on 10 May to get public input and create awareness of upcoming project objectives, schedule and milestones. Approximately 45 individuals attended.
- LD 25 and Pool 25 Water Level Management. A public meeting was held on 11 May to discuss water level management. Approximately 75 individuals attended.

f. Scott Whitney and Chuck Spitzcak are working on a NESP newsletter for stakeholders.

5. Environmental Management Program (EMP) (Roger Perk)

a. Planning for the Lake Odessa Habitat Rehabilitation and Enhancement Project (HREP) is nearing completion. We are waiting on the floodplain permit from the State of Iowa which requested additional modeling. The Smith Creek HREP is being deferred possibly indefinitely due to minimal project benefits.

b. Roger Perk stated that they are accepting fact sheets for new HREP projects. FWIC will collect new fact sheets for projects in the Rock Island District. The goal is to have fact sheets submitted by mid-to late summer. Rick Nelson stated that FWS would like someone to take over chairmanship of the FWIC.

c. EMP is planning to do targeted strategic planning to identify top or critical issues in the program. Continue looking at how EMP and NESP fit together. The Additional Program Elements (APES) for LTRM were prioritized by the Corps and USGS.

d. An EMP Workshop will be held in the Quad Cities August 17-19 for engineers and biologists. Agenda for the workshop should be available at the upcoming EMP-CC meeting. The workshop will address the design handbook and HREP database among other things.

e. Mike Griffin asked if the Corps survey crew was requested to do soundings in the Beaver Island backwater complex of Pool 14 as pre-project monitoring for a potential HREP. Mike Cox replied that they would attempt to do this work.

6. Watershed and Ecosystem Programs (Marshall Plumley)

The Draft Illinois River Basin Restoration Comprehensive Plan is still under policy review at Corps Headquarters. Public review will follow HQ approval. The Peoria Riverfront Development Project Cooperation Agreement (PCA) is being reviewed at Corps Headquarters. The project will proceed to construction when the PCA is approved and executed. Three ecosystem restoration projects under the Illinois River Basin Restoration are in design (plans and specifications) – Waubonsie Creek (NE Illinois), Pekin North and Pekin South. Design is nearly complete for Pekin North.

7. Environmental Continuing Authorities Program (Marshall Plumley)

Funding for Environmental CAP is limited and only congressionally-named projects are being worked on this FY. Those projects in the Rock Island District include Duck Creek (Davenport, IA), Ventura Marsh (Clear Lake, IA), Iowa River-Clear Creek (Coralville-Iowa City, IA), Quincy Bay (Quincy, IL), Storm Lake (IA), and Kankakee River (IL). Division approved the Blackhawk Bottoms (Pool 18) Section 204 Project Preliminary Restoration Plan and we have initiated the Planning, Design Analysis (PDA) Phase. Kansas City District will prepare the PDA for this project. A site visit is next Tuesday May 24, 2005.

8. Upper Mississippi River Comprehensive Plan (Jack Carr)

The draft report is being completed. Following an in-house review, it will be sent to the collaboration team. If funding is available, a public meeting may be held this fiscal year. Raising the Fabius Levee to protect the Quincy Bridge has a benefit-to-cost ration greater than 1.0. If there is an interested cost-share sponsor, we will proceed to feasibility.

9. Floodplain Management (Jerry Skalak)

a. UMRS Flow Frequency Study and Floodplain Management Services (FPMS) Program. A Data Quality Act Petition has been filed by the Missouri River Coalition for the Environment against the UMRS Flow Frequency Study. Dr. David Goldman, CRREL, has been tasked with developing the Corps' response.

b. Planning Assistance to States. Information was given on the following projects:

- Sunset Marina (Rock Island, IL) - Developing plan to address marina entrance channel chronic siltation problem
- Quad Cities stormwater management projects prioritization (River Action, Davenport, IA) – District is developing, with the assistance of River Action, a scope of work for regionally prioritizing stormwater management projects. Scoping has been difficult due to need for input from multiple interests and efforts to redirect it toward water quality issues.
- FPMS Special Studies. Information was given on the following projects:
- Joyce's Slough (Clinton, IA) – The Corps is continuing hydraulic modeling of the upper reach of the slough. Completion of work this fiscal year is dependent on funding.
- Jack Oak Slough (Cassville, WI) – Siltation and bankline erosion problems have been identified by local interests. The District is developing a SOW for hydraulic modeling of slough.

10. Fish and Wildlife Interagency Committee (FWIC) (Rick Nelson)

A brief update was provided on FWIC.

11. Dredged Material Management Plans (DMMP) (Jerry Skalak)

a. Information was provided on the following projects:

- Lock and Dam 21. We are pushing to get final report completed this year.
- Lucas Berg. The District has completed its site re-evaluation report and is starting to work on the evaluation of engineering alternatives and an EIS.
- LaSalle. A formal request for RRCT approval of the recommendation of the final preferred plan is pending resolution of bald eagle nest issue with the IL DNR. Bob Schanzle will coordinate FWS letter regarding bald eagle with IL DNR Natural Heritage staff. Bob Clevestine recommended contacting Jody Millar at FWS if additional coordination is needed. Following resolution of this issue, an email will be sent to RRCT members requesting a vote on the recommendation of approval for the

- LaSalle DMMP. Gretchen Benjamin recommended that information pertaining to any item(s) to be voted on be sent out 2 weeks prior to the RRCT meeting.

b. Channel Maintenance Management Plans (ChaMPPs) (Steve Johnson). Steve Johnson is completing the Program Management Plan for the ChaMPPs. Teams are actively working on ChaMPP for the LaGrange Pool and Pool 18. The Corps is compiling pool maps with data layers of DMMP, non-DMMP, CARS, National Wetlands Inventory, Cultural resources, Natural Resources Inventory, FWIC environmental pool plans, and NESP ecosystem restoration considerations. Coordination letters for both LaGrange and Pool 18 ChaMPPs will be mailed out in June for external coordination. Jerry Skalak stated that these two pool plans will be the models for future plans and that comments on the plans and process are appreciated. Nicole McVay stated that the LaGrange ChaMPP has identified 17 potential sites. Public meetings to present the preferred alternative may be held by the end of this Fiscal Year.

12. 404 Impact Analysis (Mark Cornish)

Mark Cornish reported that the 404 Study Team had not met since the January RRCT meeting. He explained that the 404 Study Team is a sub committee from the FWIC whose purpose is to scientifically evaluate the effects of dredged material placement on our natural resources. Members of the team include natural resource managers from State and federal agencies. He then reviewed the status of the 404 Studies:

- Fisheries – The Team is working with researchers to complete reports from previous years field work. Nate Caswell (USFWS) has submitted a manuscript to the North American Journal of Fish Management on the work that he performed in Pool 21 and in LaGrange Pool. Dan Kirby and Mel Bowler (Iowa DNR) have submitted a draft report for the work done in Pool 12 at Island 241. There was no fisheries field work is scheduled in 2005.
- Mussels – The 404 Study Team has reviewed a Scope of Work for a study in Pool 18 that will examine re-colonization rates of mussels. This work may be delayed until next year if there is not sufficient funding in FY05.
- Plants – no vegetation work this year.
- Invertebrates – A study was done in the fall of 2004 and completed in March in the LaGrange Pool of the IWW. Cornish anticipated that a draft report would be available for 404 Study Team review prior to the next RRCT.
- Sediment transportation – Clint Beckert has completed the analysis of the Pool 18 samples. Seventy five percent of the draft report is done and it should be finished by the end of June.
- Turtles – The 404 Study Team is looking at the behavior of turtles in Pool 13 upstream of Savannah. Turtle nesting on dredged material placement sites will be studied. The study site is a popular recreation area for boaters, so there is potential for nest disturbance by beach users at this site.

13. Committee to Assess Regulating Structures (CARS) (Mike Cox)

A meeting of the CARS was held in April. The Corps is now doing 10-year CARS plans rather than the typical 5 year CARS plans. This is to bring CARS more in line with long-term planning, as this work is to be included in the Channel Maintenance Management Plans (work will still be implemented under CARS). Following is an update on specific projects (Attachment 2 provides additional details):

- Wing dams at Hogback Island (Pool 21) are scheduled to be rebuilt this year.
- Minor bank protection at Lock 20 Upper Approach is anticipated.
- The Corps is planning to place rock at locations in Pool 13 as part of the Sabula Reach DMMP. Rock is to be placed prior to placement of dredged material to minimize migration of dredged material off site, when that material is placed for island creation. The Corps completed surveys and it appears dredging may be required to access the island areas. The Corps will attempt to place rock without dredging for access.

14. Dredging Update (Mike Cox)

a. Water quality certification with the Illinois EPA continues to be a challenge due to the permit application fee issue.

b. Illinois Waterway. Because of funding issues, only the bare minimum was dredged last year with a total of 75,000 CY of material. FY2005 OSITs for the Illinois Waterway are tentatively scheduled for Jun 14-17. Emergency dredging is underway at Beardstown. A contract is going out today (May 17, 2005) for regular channel maintenance dredging. We should be ready to start dredging by late July. Below is information on specific dredge cuts (Attachment 3 provides additional details):

- Beardstown. Beardstown Emergency Dredging. Mechanical dredging is ongoing using the hydraulic contract dredge. Mechanical dredging has been completed, as a pilot channel is open. Mike Cox applauds everyone for responding quickly and getting the job done. IL EPA gave verbal authority (401 water quality certification) to do the work.
- Marseilles. Marseilles Lock will get mechanical dredging for normal maintenance which is being coordinated with the OSIT. Mike Cox referred to the handout and mentioned that the lower portion of Marseilles is completed to what they think needs to be done to safely maintain the navigation on the river. Bob Schanzle asked it would be possible to revegetate the Marseilles Bell Island site as portions of the site are filled. Mike Cox replied that revegetation was possible and that the material was pushed to back of site as OSIT requested. A roughly 50 foot wide strip has been raised to the design elevation. If this is too narrow we can still stabilize the north bank. Bob replied he'd like to see that get underway.
- Kankakee Area. Coordination with the Coast Guard is underway to better mark the Kankakee areas with buoys in an effort to better mark that portion of the Illinois Waterway Navigation Channel.

- The towing industry has indicated there are new areas of concerns that have become a high priority – Senachwine Creek and Henry. Dredging is schedule for later this year.

c. Mississippi River. Projections for dredging on the Mississippi are 429,000 CY which is pretty typical. Last year, a lot less was dredged (312,000 CY) for a variety of reasons. The 2005 OSIT has not been scheduled, but coordination will begin at the end of this month. The *Dredge Goetz*, the *Dredge Thompson* replacement, is making its way to the Mississippi River and will be fully operation within the next few weeks. The new dredge will be christened in Winona on June 24, 2005. The *Dredge Thompson* will be used as a quarters boat and as a tow boat until replacement is completed (tow boat in FY06 and quarters boat in FY07). Building a quarters barge separate from the dredge will save about \$3 million. Below is information on specific dredge cuts (Attachment 4 provides additional details)::

- L/D 22 Lower. Mechanical dredging was conducted for a significant shoal at L & D 22 Lower. It was less then 20,000 cubic yards but was extended into the channel 400 feet. The work was done downstream from St. Louis lock. Janet Sternburg stated that the St. Louis District is working with the Missouri DNR in trying to elevate Gilbert Island and see if the habitat is enhanced. This may provide additional dredged material placement options for L/D 22 Lower.
- Burlington Bluff. Dredging below the railroad bridge at Burlington Bluff is planned due to channel narrowing. Dredging was deferred last year because a significant mussel assemblage was located along the nearby historic bankline placement site. This year we will try mechanical digging and place the material along Craigel Island which is an approved site under the Kemps/Craigel DMMP.
- Willow Bar Island. If time and funding allows, more material will be taken from Willow Bar Island and put on the Illinois side upland site.

15. Administrative Issues

The next RRCT was tentatively set for October 18, 2005 in conjunction with the Navigation Environmental Coordination Committee (NECC) meeting. The meeting will start at 12:00 p.m. in the ABC conference room. The materials needed for meeting will be given out earlier. We need an acknowledgement that everyone receiving the materials and had the time to read it.

Attachments (4)

Kenn Shoemaker
Co-chair RRCT

CF (w/o attachments):

PM-M (Dist) (w/attachments)

PM-F (Kincaid, Thompson, Schroeder)

PM-M (Perk, Skalak, Whitney)

PM-A (Barr, Carr, Cornish, Johnson)

OD-T (Hardison, Cox)

External Distribution:

Gretchen Benjamin, Wisconsin DNR

Jim Mick, Illinois DNR

Gary Clark, Illinois DNR

Bob Schanzle, Illinois DNR

Mike Griffin, Iowa DNR

Janet Sternburg, Missouri Department of Conservation

Vicki Stoeller, Upper Mississippi, Illinois and Missouri Rivers Association

Rick Nelson, US Fish and Wildlife Service