

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Meeting Summary of River Resources Coordinating Team, January 23-24, 2006.

1. A meeting of the River Resources Coordinating Team was held on January 23rd from 12:30-4:30 and January 24th from 8:30-11:30 in the Rock Island District, Conference Rooms ABC. The agenda is provided as Attachment 1. The following individuals participated in the meeting:

Kenn Shoemaker, Corps (Co-chair)	Mark Cornish, Corps
Gretchen Benjamin, Wisconsin DNR (Co-chair)	Kenny Brenner, Corps
Jim Fischer, Wisconsin DNR	Mike Cox, Corps
Mike Griffin, Iowa DNR	Bob Lazenby, Corps
Martin Konrad, Iowa DNR	Tim Fiscus, Corps
Jim Mick, Illinois DNR	Charlene Carmack, Corps
Bob Schanzle, Illinois DNR	Mark Schroeder, Corps
Terry Savko, Illinois Department of Agriculture	Scott Whitney, Corps
Rick Nelson, USFWS Rock Island Field Office	Marvin Hubbell, Corps
Jon Duyvejonck, USFWS Rock Island Field Office	Mike Tarpey, Corps
Tim Yager, USFWS Upper Mississippi Fish and Wildlife Refuge	John Kincaid, Corps
Ed Britton, USFWS Upper Mississippi Fish and Wildlife Refuge	Camie Knollenberg, Corps
Doug Blodgett, The Nature Conservancy	Marshall Plumley, Corps
Chuck Theiling, Corps Mississippi Valley Division representative	Dorie Bollman, Corps
George Hardison, Corps	Joe Jordan, Corps
Teresa Kincaid, Corps	Jodi Staebell, Corps
Ken Barr, Corps	

2. The group approved the minutes of the October 2005 meeting with minor corrections. The final minutes are included as Attachment 2.

3. Budget Status. The group discussed the budget status at the various agencies.

a. Corps. Kenn Shoemaker provided budget information for the Corps' Operations Division. There are significant funding shortages on the Illinois Waterway and some of the reservoirs. To address funding shortfalls on the Illinois Waterway, the Corps has eliminated some of the gaging stations on the Illinois River tributaries, deployed the maintenance crew to hurricane relief, and is not doing some of the periodic inspections. Indications are that funding constraints will continue over the next few years due to the Global War on Terrorism and response to natural disasters. Teresa Kincaid provided budget information on study and construction funds. This Fiscal Year (FY) the Corps continues work on Illinois River basin

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Restoration (Section 519) and Illinois Ecosystem Restoration, will finish the Upper Mississippi River Comprehensive Plan reconnaissance phase, and continue work (\$20 M) on the Navigation and Ecosystem Sustainability Program (Navigation Study). In FY 06, the Corps has \$3M in construction on the Des Moines River Greenbelt, \$20M for the Environmental Management Program (EMP), and is conducting lock and dam rehabilitations at Lock and Dams 11 and 19. Lock and Dam 11 will be closed next winter for rehab work. There was a 1% rescission of funding across the board to fund hurricane recovery. Funding for Continuing Authorities Programs such as Sections 1135 and 206 is also limited. Only congressionally-named projects are being funded. Kincaid explained that the Corps funding authorization had language that changes some of the way we do business. Language limiting the use of continuing contract clauses requires the Corps to fully fund contracts up front. Language limiting the reprogramming of funds from one project to another also affects Corps' flexibility. Mike Griffin and Gretchen Benjamin both expressed concern about how the fully funded contracts may affect the EMP Program.

b. US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS). Rick Nelson stated that the funding for Ecological Services has been flat-lined and noted that the FWS also had the 1% rescission for hurricane relief. Ed Britton stated that FWS Refuges funding has also been flat-lined and that the Upper Mississippi River Fish and Wildlife Refuge is not filling some vacancies due to funding constraints.

c. Wisconsin DNR. Gretchen Benjamin stated that the Wisconsin DNR has been experiencing budget cuts since 1996 and their budget is now stabilizing.

d. Iowa DNR. Mike Griffin stated that Iowa is also dealing with budget cuts. The conservation and recreation departments rely on license fees. He noted that the increase in deer licenses has been beneficial.

e. Illinois DNR. Jim Mick stated that the Illinois DNR has been experiencing budget cuts and travel restrictions.

4. RRCT Operating Procedures

Mike Griffin accepted the co-chairmanship for Iowa and will start at the May 2006 meeting. The group discussed RRCT Operating Procedures (Attachment 3) and potential increased activity for RRCT if NESP is authorized (Attachment 4 – NESP Institutional Arrangements excerpt). The group discussed the goals listed at the end of the Operating Procedures and agreed that these are primarily focused on channel maintenance activities and do not address ecosystem restoration activities.

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The team discussed the request by the State of Illinois to have a separate river team (RRCT-level) and/or work group (FWIC-level). The initial request came at a December 2004 meeting between the Corps, IL DNR, others, and Congressman Ray LaHood's office. The request arose from concern that there are technical experts from the Illinois River that are not as involved in the FWIC as they could be. The RRCT discussed the difficulty of adequately addressing both the Mississippi and Illinois Rivers at the FWIC meetings. Potential organizational structures were drafted and coordinated with the Illinois DNR (Attachment 5). These concepts are preliminary and have not been coordinated with the St. Louis District and the River Resources Action Team. The options for draft organizational structures vary in that some use existing groups such as the Illinois River Basin Restoration System Team and/or Executive Committee while others establish new groups. Some options have a FWIC-level Illinois team while others have both FWIC- and RRCT-level Illinois teams. Jim Mick stated that the State of Illinois would like to table further discussion to allow additional internal coordination. Rick Nelson stated that he was reluctant to significantly change the institutional arrangements unless NESP is authorized. Other agencies representatives expressed concerns that the State of Illinois might be overrepresented in this new structure. Agency representatives were asked to delay review of these proposals until they can be further coordinated with the state of Illinois.

5. Dredging and Committee to Assess Regulating Structures (CARS) (Kenny Brenner). Dredging quantities for FY05 have been finalized (Attachment 6). Kenny Brenner noted that at the Willow Bar dredge cut, the actual quantity dredged was twice as much as was estimated because the placement site had sufficient capacity and dredging equipment was available. A CARS meeting was held in December and the next CARS meeting is scheduled for March 28.

6. Dredged Material Management Plans (DMMP) (Jerry Skalak) Jerry Skalak reviewed the FY06 Dredged Material Management Program Products list (Attachment 7). The majority of the Illinois River DMMP work is on hold due to funding limitations. Work continues on the Quiver DMMP which is anticipated to be ready for approval at the next RRCT meeting. Cultural resource work is being completed for Site 8 of the L/D 22 DMMP. Acquisition of the Keithsburg Mitigation site is pending.

Bob Lazenby, Corps Office of Counsel gave an update on DMMP-related real estate issues. Lazenby explained that before DMMP was formalized, permits were used for dredged material placement. The permits are appropriate for one-time placement. There is no compensation to the landowner when permits are used. Permits are not appropriate for use of placement sites under a long-term plan. Land acquisition is appropriate for long-term use of placement sites. Mike Griffin asked if other districts are using permits

for placement. Although other districts may use permits, the Rock Island District position is that a real estate interested is needed for long-term sites.

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Bob Lazenby also described the District effort to get authorization in the Water Resources Development Act to enter into Project Cooperation Agreements (PCA) with levee and drainage districts for placement of dredged material behind levees. Entering into agreements with the levee and drainage districts would allow greater flexibility. The Corps currently deals with landowners on an individual basis. If this PCA is authorized, individual Project Cooperation Agreements would be drafted, negotiated with levee and drainage districts and approved by Corps higher authority.

Lazenby stated that the Dresden DMMP condemnation is proceeding. The Corps is now in possession of the property and there will be a trial in March to determine how much the Corps will pay for the property.

Mike Griffin asked about the status of coordination with the Dairyland Power Cooperative regarding the placement site for the Bass Island dredge cut. The power company has requested costly contamination assessments each time this placement site is used. The Corps position is that other contamination testing has shown that sediments typically dredged are free of contaminants and that these assessments are not necessary. Mike Cox stated that the Corps periodically coordinates with the power company to see if their position has changed. He stated that if this dredge cut would require dredging this year, the Corps would likely request bankline placement.

Jerry Skalak described that there is a significant amount of work involved in acquisition of DMMP sites, especially in survey of lands.

Steve Johnson provided schedules for upcoming Channel Maintenance Pool Plans (ChaMPPs) tasks and reasoning behind ChaMPPs priorities (Attachment 8). Steve explained that the lower pools are high ChaMPPs priorities as the 40-year dredging projections are higher for these pools. The Dresden and Brandon Road pools are the next ChaMPPs for the Illinois Waterway due to the complexities in the Peoria pool. Summaries of comments from the LaGrange and Pool 18 ChaMPPs public meetings have been mailed out. The need for additional capacity for advanced dredging for the NESP Pool 18 proposed Environmental Drawdown is being considered in the Pool 18 ChaMPP. The Pool 19 ChaMPP has been initiated. A map is available and will be emailed to all. The goal is to have the Draft Pool 19 ChaMPP by the May RRCT meeting and the final plan completed by the October RRCT meeting. Gretchen Benjamin asked about efforts to integrate the Channel Maintenance Pool Plans with the Environmental Pool Plans and other efforts. Mike Griffin stated that the FWIC Environmental Pool Plans are being completed this spring. Ken Barr explained that the NESP Pool 18 "sandbox" efforts are targeted at integrating channel maintenance and ecosystem restoration needs.

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7. Floodplain Management Services (Jerry Skalak)

- The Rock Island District has the lead on work for FEMA to complete evaluations of all mainstem Illinois Waterway and Mississippi River levees using the new flood profiles. These evaluations will be used to certify levees and this information will eventually be used in the flood insurance program. Skalak clarified that this effort will use existing levee elevation data. Jerry Galloway (former Corps General) is leading an effort to develop a nation-wide levee database and standardize levee policies and certification requirements.
- The final report for the study at Joyces Slough will be available in February. Mike Griffin requested a copy of this report.
- There is no funding this FY for H&H and sediment transport studies at Jack Oak Slough near Cassville, Wisconsin.
- The draft report for LaSalle/I&M Canal is complete.

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

- Information Papers on all FY06 NESP projects are being updated and will be forwarded as read-ahead material prior to the upcoming NECC-ECC meeting (February 21-22). In addition to the Information Papers, a Stakeholder listing and revised FY06 Workplan will also be sent to NECC-ECC members for their review and comment.
- The website will be updated. It will provide ready access to NESP program and project information as well as links to a variety of additional resources.
- The navigation efficiency team selected the lift-in technology for design of 1200 foot locks at both Lock 22 and 25. Possible channel re-alignments and upstream-vs.-downstream construction are still being considered and evaluated by the study teams.
- Fish entrainment studies are on-hold due to difficulty finding a tow to pull the trawling net. The barge industry is still dealing with back-up issues caused by the Hurricane Katrina. The Corps hopes to secure industry commitment in January allowing study team to proceed with spring sampling.
- Ken Barr stated that the Science Panel Report is out for review and will be discussed at the NECC-ECC meeting. Comments on the report are due by March 10th.

Scott Whitney stated that the NESP has expressed a capability to accomplish \$5-6 M more work this FY. Gretchen Benjamin expressed concern that this over capability doesn't take funds or resources from EMP work. This is not a valid concern as the two programs secure funding from two separate appropriation accounts – NESP is funded from the General Investigation (GI) account and EMP is funded from the Construction General (CG) account. The chance of getting additional capability funds beyond the

existing appropriations is slim due to new re-programming legislation. Reallocation of FY06 funds amongst the various 34 NESP project is likely to happen.

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Mike Griffin expressed concern that some interagency team members had not been contacted by the NESP team leaders. This may be due to lack of activity on specific teams due to funding constraints.

9. NESP Projects

a. Pool 11 Islands Mussel Survey (Ken Barr)

Ken stated that the draft Pool 11 Islands mussel survey report (Attachment 9) was received just before Christmas. The survey found over 1,600 individual mussels of 26 species (Map – Attachment 10). The mussel bed has good diversity and good age structure. Eight (8) individual Higgins' eye pearlymussels (*Lampsilis higginsii*) were found. The area surveyed consisted of the tops of submerged islands which are proposed for island construction

The Corps and Fish and Wildlife Service Rock Island Field Office met to discuss this issue the week of January 17th. The group considered not only potential impacts to federally protected species, but also the broader issue of potential negative impacts to an area that supports a significant mussel resource. Rick Nelson stated that Programmatic Section 7 Consultation for the Navigation Study predicted incidental take of 500 Higgins' eye for all NESP activities over the 50 year project life. Incidental take for the Pool 11 Islands Project as presently proposed could exceed 500 individuals.

Gretchen Benjamin noted that an estimated 4.3 million mussels died in the Pool 5 Drawdown. The group discussed whether there will be continued conflicts between the desire to restore habitat and desire to avoid impacts to mussel resources. Gretchen Benjamin stated that the Pool 11 Islands project was designed to promote better habitat and that Wisconsin is a strong proponent of the mussel resources.

The group also discussed variability in the native mussel community. Rick Nelson noted that this mussel bed appears to meet the criteria for essential *L. higginsii* habitat. The next step is to broaden discussion to include FWS refuges, Wisconsin and Iowa DNRs and the NECC. The group may need to relook at cumulative effects of restoration projects on mussel resources considering the Pool 5 Drawdown and Pool 11 Islands projects.

The Pool 11 Islands Project was selected as a NESP project because it was anticipated that prior work done on the project would enable it to get to construction quickly. With the mussel issues, the group questioned whether it should still be considered in this way.

b. Illinois Water Level Fluctuations (Kevin Landwehr)

Kevin Landwehr presented the preliminary findings of the NESP team that evaluated the potential to reduce short-term water level fluctuations on the Illinois Waterway through

improved dam operations. This effort has been coordinated with the Illinois River Basin Restoration Program. The slides are included as Attachment 11 and a preliminary draft report is included as Attachment 12. The team evaluated the potential benefits that would result from

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perfect river forecasting and the ability to make gate changes every 2 hours. Modeling of the above actions resulted in reduction in small (0.5-1.0 foot) fluctuations, but did not affect the larger fluctuations. Further coordination and study indicated that the large fluctuations had a greater affect on vegetation distribution. Reduction of the small fluctuations without reducing the large fluctuations would result in minimal biological response. Results were shared with USFWS, Illinois DNR, The Nature Conservancy, Rip Sparks and the Illinois River Basin Restoration Team. The study team recommends stopping work on this project until the large fluctuations can be reduced. The large fluctuations are affected by numerous factors. Fluctuations caused by the wicket gates are to be addressed in the next 35 years of NESP and the Illinois River Basin Restoration. Gretchen Benjamin asked if NESP could start addressing the wicket-induced fluctuations now in place of the short-term fluctuations study. Corps representatives responded that the estimated cost of the study and implementation efforts to reduce the wicket-induced fluctuations is significantly greater than that of the current study efforts. Kenn Shoemaker noted that he would like some additional internal discussion on the navigation study's wicket analysis.

c. Fish Passage at L/D 22 and 26 (Mel Price L/D) (Mark Cornish)

Mark Cornish reviewed the status of the NESP Fish Passage Projects at L/D 22 and 26 (Attachment 13). Key differences that affect design of a fish passage structure were briefly discussed. L/D 22 is older construction (1938), has 11 feet of head, and has a rural setting. L/D 26 (Mel Price) is relatively new construction (1997), has 24 feet of head, is in an urban setting, and has 20% greater flow than L/D 22. The invasive Asian Carp is found upstream and downstream of both dams. The team has sought expert advice from Luther Aadland (Minnesota DNR) and John Nestler. The team had a good experience coordinating the project with the NESP Science Panel. The study team and Science Panel discussed how to monitor system-scale impacts of fish passage projects and how to make the fish passage design flexible enough to allow experimentation after construction. This will be discussed further at the NECC meeting. FY05 monitoring included tailwater bathymetry, fish electrofishing and netting, and hydroacoustic evaluation of fish concentrations in the tailwaters. Cornish will present details of this effort at the Upper Mississippi River Conservation Committee meeting in March.

d. Navigation Efficiency (Michael Tarpey)

Mike Tarpey provided an update on Navigation Efficiency projects under NESP (Attachment 14). The presentation outlined the activities for the first 15 years of NESP implementation and addressed FY05 and FY06 work.

- Mooring cells. In FY06, the Corps plans to finalize mooring cell locations, prioritize cell placement, finalize site-specific design, and resolve industry acceptability issues. Gretchen Benjamin noted that WDNR prefers sites with depths equal to or greater than 13 feet for placement of mooring cells. She also recommended placement of

temporary mooring cells to test whether the location works for the navigation industry prior to placement of a permanent mooring cell. There will be more discussion of buoy locations at the NECC meeting.

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- Switchboats. The Navigation Study recommends government contracted-switchboats upstream and downstream of the lower 5 lock and dams. In FY05, legal and logistical issues related to switchboats were evaluated.
- New 1200' Locks
The schedule developed during the feasibility study estimated the time from initiation of design of 1200' locks to completion of construction to be 13 years. These efforts are not being funded as aggressively as anticipated; therefore, the timeline may need to be extended. Locks at 20 and 22 have a rock foundation, while Lock 21 has a sand foundation. A lock founded on rock is cheaper to build than a lock founded on sand. LaGrange and Peoria would be constructed on the landside of the existing lock and will be built "in the dry". The group discussed the idea that to get the full benefit of navigation efficiencies, you need 1200' locks at all 5 locations on the Mississippi river (Locks 20-25) and 2 locks on the Illinois River. Delayed implementation will delay benefits. Ken Barr considers that we are in Year (-3) relative to the schedule in the feasibility study. FY05 activities included public meetings, finalizing lock wall and approach design, hydraulic modeling and mussel surveys. In FY06 there will be additional public meetings, continued work on the environmental assessments, lock alignment study at LaGrange, and geotechnical exploration. LaGrange got a slower start and is only funded at \$100k this year. Tarpey also mentioned the need to close the boat ramp at the downstream end of L/D 22 during construction. To minimize recreation impacts during construction, the study team will be looking for alternate locations for a boat ramp.
- The RRCT discussed the desire to have industry representatives participate in the RRCT. Bill Gretten (Rock Island District Mississippi River Operations Manager) may know of some industry representatives that may be interested in participating in the RRCT.

10. Upper Mississippi River Comprehensive Plan (Teresa Kincaid)

The internal independent technical review is ongoing and scheduled to be completed with revisions to the report in February. Public meetings will follow. There will be four public meetings. The management team will also offer to visit each of the state capitols so that multiple state agencies can be briefed. Each state POC will be contacted to schedule the meetings.

11. State Reports

a. Wisconsin. Sedimentation in Jack Oak Slough is on the legislative radar screen. Jim Fisher is the Mississippi River planner for WDNR and will be attending the RRCT.

b. Iowa. Martin Konrad is a DNR staffer in Des Moines that has been assigned the handle Mississippi River issues (similar to the position held by Kevin Szcodronski). Kirk Hansen has been hired to backfill for Tom Boland.

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c. Illinois. The Illinois DNR is dealing with budget issues. They have closed the office on the Upper Mississippi River that was located in Aledo. Ed Walsh is the only fisheries biologist on the Upper Mississippi River in the upper portions of the Rock Island District; Butch Atwood is the fisheries biologist for the Upper Mississippi River in the lower portions of the Rock Island District. Jim Mick is the fisheries biologist for the Illinois River. The Governor of Illinois is preparing a proposal for the capital budget. This is the part of the state budget that cost-shares projects with the Corps. Bob Schanzle noted that the Illinois River OSIT mid-winter meeting is scheduled for February 15th at the Forbes Biological Station in Havana.

12. Fish and Wildlife Interagency Committee (FWIC) (Jodi Staebell)

a. Jodi Staebell is working with Bob Clevestine as a FWIC co-chair for a one-year period. The FWIC met on December 6-7 and January 12 .

b. HREP Fact Sheets. Fact Sheets for new EMP Habitat Rehabilitation and Enhancement Projects (HREPs) were submitted by state agencies and USFWS. A set of priority projects were selected at the January meeting and are recommended for approval by RRCT. The priority projects include (not in priority order) (Fact Sheets Attachment 15):

- Turkey River Delta/Bottoms and Jack Oak Island Backwater, Pool 11 (Iowa and Wisconsin)
- Snyder Slough and Hurricane Chute, Pool 11 (Wisconsin)
- Steamboat Island Overwintering Fish Project, Pool 14 (Iowa)
- Boston Bay, Pool 18 (Illinois)
- Keithsburg Division, Pool 18 (Illinois)
- Delair Division, Pool 24 (Illinois)
- Mast Tree Component, Pools 11-22
- Small Quantity Dredging, Pools 11-22

The group clarified that the mast tree component and small quantity dredging projects should include the UMRS in the Rock Island District which includes the Illinois River. The mast tree component project needs to be closely coordinated with Gary Swenson, MVR Mississippi River Forester. These projects would be similar to the St. Paul District's Mississippi River Bank Stabilization HREP. Marvin Hubbell stated that under currently funding levels, the Corps does not anticipate initiating construction on these new projects before 2012.

While it was noted and discussed that no new HREPs were recommended for the Illinois River, the group agreed that the states were given ample opportunity to submit new projects and acknowledged that the Illinois DNR is pursuing restoration projects on the

Illinois River under NESP, Illinois Basin Restoration and EMP (Rice Lake HREP). Jim Mick stated that the ILDNR would prefer to have only one list of priority projects.

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Gretchen Benjamin expressed frustration that RRCT members had less than one week to review the recommended fact sheets before they were asked to approve them. Marvin Hubbell and Chuck Theiling clarified that the Corps would forward the priority projects to the System Evaluation Team. The SET will sequence the priority project based on system-scale needs.

The RRCT approved the above list of priority HREPs for the Rock Island District. The FWIC will update the fact sheets to include additional project detail requested by the Corps and submit the fact sheets to the Corps. RRCT members will be provided copies of the updated fact sheets.

c. Environmental Pool Plans. FWIC Environmental Pool Plans for the Upper Mississippi River Pools have been drafted. Mike Griffin and Bob Clevestine will complete text revisions by the end of February. Mike Steuck will complete plan maps by the end of March. The Corps may be able to edit the document and prepare it for printing. The goal is to share the costs of printing among the state agencies. The FWIC is considering asking the NRCS Resource Conservation and Development offices to host meetings with landowners, prior to distribution of the pool plans, to discuss the pool plan recommendations related to floodplain restoration.

d. The RRCT discussed issues related to the FWIC charter. The FWIC co-chairs will investigate the issues listed below and report at the May meeting. Mike Cox clarified that the Illinois OSIT meets every other year with the FWIC and the Mississippi River OSIT meets every year with the FWIC.

- Do FWIC and OSIT have a designated voting member from each state or agency? If so, please provide a list of these individuals to RRCT members.
- Does the FWIC charter identify a decision-making process (consensus vs. 1 vote/agency)?
- Does FWIC serve at the pleasure of the RRCT or is it a stand-alone committee?

13. Environmental Management Program (EMP) (Marvin Hubbell)

Marvin Hubbell reported that the 2004 EMP Report to Congress was briefed to Mr. Woodley Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works and has been sent on to the Office of Management and Budget. Mr. Woodley thought EMP was a success story and sent a copy of the report to the Council on Environmental Quality.

This year is the 20th anniversary of EMP. The Corps is considering what should be done to mark this event and is looking for ideas. Rick Nelson suggested inviting Congressional members for a day on the river” during the congressional recess to thank them for their support of EMP.

The MIPRs (funding) for the Long Term Resource Monitoring (LTRM) component are on the way to the Upper Midwest Environmental Science Center (UMESC). The lack of savings and slippage this year resulting in higher funding amounts for EMP. In FY06 the Minimal Sustainable Program, 15 Additional Program Elements (APEs), and additional items recommended by UMESC were funded. The additional items included work on data visualization tools, status and trends, bathymetry, and equipment refreshing. For HREPs, Rock

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Island and St. Louis District have additional funding needs of approximately \$700k this year due to the requirement for fully funded contracts. At EMP-CC there will be discussion about moving funds from LTRM to HREP to cover these additional needs. In past years funds have been transferred from HREP to LTRM.

Fact Sheets for Beaver Island and Huron Island Habitat Rehabilitation and Enhancement Projects are being sent to the Mississippi Valley Division for approval. Work on these projects had been initiated prior to FY06 and the District will accelerate the development of the Definite Project Report (DPR) for each. Construction on Lake Odessa HREP will be initiated late in FY06. In FY07, the Corps anticipates continuing construction on Lake Odessa HREP and initiating construction on Rice Lake HREP.

14. Illinois River Basin Restoration (Camie Knollenberg)

The Illinois River Basin Restoration Comprehensive Report will be distributed for public review in February. Public meetings are scheduled for March 7-9 and 14-16 at six locations in the basin. FY06 work includes completing the Comprehensive Plan, continuing feasibility level work on 2 existing Critical Restoration Projects and initiating work on 7 new Critical Restoration Projects including (Kankakee River, Blackberry Creek, Senachwine Creek, Tenmile Creek, Crow Creek West, Yellow River (IN), Fox River, Starved Rock Pool (side channel and island), and Alton Pool (side channel and island). A total of 16 critical restoration projects have been approved to date. If the program receives \$2.3 M of Construction General funding in payback (loaned to other projects in previous years), the plans and specifications and draft Project Cooperation Agreement (PCA) would be completed for the Pekin Lake Northern and Southern Unit Critical Restoration Projects, Plans and Specifications for the Waubonsie Creek Critical Restoration Project would continue, and the Project Cooperation Agreement (PCA) would be signed and the construction contract would be awarded for the Peoria Lake – Upper Island Critical Restoration Project.

15. Environmental Continuing Authorities Programs (CAP) (Camie Knollenberg)

The appropriations bill only allows work on projects where funds were carried-over from FY05 and projects specifically named in the FY06 Appropriations Bill. Named projects for the Rock Island District included Emiquon (Illinois), Kankakee State Line (Illinois), Storm Lake (Iowa), and Ventura Marsh (Clear Lake, Iowa). The 206 Program was funded at \$5M over the appropriation limit in an attempt to address the backlog of projects. In FY06, Rock Island District had a need for \$1.4 M and will likely get only \$500k. There are potential changes in the Corps Continuing Authorities Programs that may require cost-sharing for all phases of the project (study and construction). The first \$100k would be fully Federal funds. A Feasibility Cost-Sharing Agreement would be required to share costs beyond the first \$100k (Note: Most feasibility studies cost over \$100k). This may be difficult for the project sponsors as the real estate credits often

cover the sponsor's cost-share requirements, but are not applied until construction. The requirement to fully fund contracts may also be of concern to sponsors.

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16. 404 Studies (Mark Cornish)

The FWIC recommended that the Corps compile a report summarizing the findings of the Corps 404 Studies. The summary report will be prepared this FY and coordinated in FY07. The Corps is currently in the 3rd year of a 5-year permit which will expire in 2008 (schedule in Attachment 16). The Corps will propose at least a 5-year permit. It is uncertain whether the next permit will have a condition requiring additional studies. Gretchen Benjamin questioned and Mike Cox verified that the Wisconsin DNR's Memorandum of Understanding for 404 Permit expires in 2010. The turtle report is currently out for review. Mike Griffin and Rick Nelson commended the Corps for their work on the 404 studies.

17. USFWS Upper Mississippi Fish and Wildlife Refuge Comprehensive Conservation Plan (Ed Britton)

The Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) efforts started in 2001. A new alternative, Alternative E was released on December 5, 2005. This alternative is a compromise and was developed in response to comments on previous alternatives. The draft CCP/EIS with Alternatives A- D was released in April 2005. After the release of Alternative E, a second round of public meetings was held in December 2005 and January 2006. The comments period was extended to March 6, 2006. The meetings have been well attended and somewhat controversial. The FWS has been receiving considerable more support for Alternative E than Alternative D. Congressman Kind supports Alternative E.

18. The RRCT resumed their discussion of the RRCT Operating Procedures. The group agreed that they would like to modify the Operating Procedures to reflect how the RRCT is currently operating. The group thought that the operating procedures were sufficient with the exception of the Goals section at the end which is current focused on channel maintenance activities. This section should be broadened to reflect the full spectrum of issues addressed at the RRCT such as ecosystem restoration and adaptive management. Jodi Staebell will get input from RRCT members and draft a revision of the goals section for review by all and discussion at the May meeting. The group discussed that non-governmental organizations would not be voting members of RRCT.

The group again discussed how to get industry representatives to attend the RRCT meetings. Another idea mentioned was to have one meeting per year with agenda items such as fleeting plans that might interest industry representatives.

19. The next meeting of the RRCT was scheduled for the afternoon of May 2nd and the morning of May 3rd at the Rock Island District Clock Tower Building. Topics to be addressed at the next meeting include:

- Presentation on recreation on the UMRS by Roger Bollman
- Review recommendation for approval of Quiver Island DMMP
- Discuss draft revisions to the RRCT Operating Procedures

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20. Following are some action items from the meeting.

Action Item	
Revise recommended HREP Fact Sheets and forward to Corps and RRCT members	FWIC
Expand RRCT mailing list to include additional industry representatives	Jodi Staebell with Bill Gretten
Draft revisions to RRCT Operating Procedures	Jodi Staebell
Clarify items with regard to FWIC charter	Bob Clevestine/Jodi Staebell
Clarify IL DNR position on separate river team for the Illinois River	Jim Mick