

**A-Team Meeting – January 25, 2021**  
**Webex Webinar**

Attendance:

A-Team Reps:

Nick Schlessler (Chair and MN Rep)  
Shawn Giblin (WI Rep)  
Scott Gritters (IA Rep)  
Matt O’Hara (IL Rep)  
Matt Vitello (MO Rep)  
Steve Winter (USFWS Rep)

USGS:

Jeff Houser  
Jennie Sauer  
Brian Ickes  
Kathi Jo Jankowski  
Nate De Jager  
Ben Finley  
Jennifer Dieck  
Jayme Strange  
Kristen Bouska  
Brian Gray

USACE:

Karen Hagerty  
Marshall Plumley  
Ben McGuire  
Davi Michl  
Eric Hanson  
Jon Hendrickson

UMRBA:

Andrew Stephenson  
Kirsten Wallace

MN:

Megan Moore  
Steve DeLain

WI:

Jim Fischer  
Deanne Drake

IA:

Dave Bierman

IL:

John Chick  
Jim Lamer

MO:

Dave Herzog  
Jess Fulgoni

USFWS:

Neal Jackson

UW-LaCrosse:

Ross Vander Vorste

Introduction and Roll Call, Nick Schlessner

Time, place, and type of next meeting and approval of Oct 2020 A-Team meeting minutes

Next meeting will be webinar with date determined by Doodle Poll in March. Meeting will avoid overlapping with MRRC.

Motion to approve minutes made by Matt Vitello and Scott Gritters (second) passed with unanimous approval.

## Charter

Nick Schlessner – Steve Winter forwarded comments to us (see below)

“Hey folks - I wanted to pass on to you some thoughts from my refuge's leadership regarding responsibility #6 in the draft A-team charter - "Ensure that perspectives of interested stakeholders and members of the public are addressed by the team at its regularly scheduled meetings."

It seems to me that the perspectives of members of the public should be presented to the larger UMRCC first before filtering down to A-team. I don't think an A-team meeting is an appropriate venue for public comment and input. Also, don't think it would be the A-teams responsibility to "address" the perspectives of interested stakeholders and members of the public. The A-team might "consider" outside perspectives and make recommendations, but its UMRCCs role to "address" outside perspectives.”

Steve would like to see #6 Amended to reflect the concerns of the Refuge

Jennie Sauer – This was changed in the draft based on the survey by Andrew

-the emphasis is meant to be on “perspectives of” not on public participation

Andrew Stephenson – perhaps use “considered:” instead of “addressed”

- This change would address Steve’s concerns

Andrew Stephenson and Matt Vitello – move #7 down to the serving roles section

Karen Hagerty – Keep Adaptive

Karen Hagerty and Kirsten Wallace – remove “thes”

Jennie Sauer – Just be specific in this document.

Steve Winter, Matt O’Hara, Nick Schlessner – No other comments .

Matt Vitello – Lean towards approval as annotated

Scott Gritters – Motion to approve as annotated with Matt Vitello second and unanimous approval.

Nick Schlessner – I will get changes made and get the document to Andrew ASAP (see bottom of minutes for update as concerns were raised after the meeting.)

## UMRR Update from Marshall Plumley



UMRR Update.pdf

Marshall Plumley – Will provide slides to Nick (see embedded PDF above)

- First want to take a minute to reflect on accomplishments during such a challengeing year

### FY 2020 Reflections

#### UMRR Program

- Partnership
  - Statements of UMRS Significance
  - 2015 2025 Strategic and Operational Plan Review
  - 2022 Report to Congress
  - 2013 UMRR Joint Charter Review
    - HREP Guidance Documents
    - A Team Roles and Responsibilities
- FY 20 represented the 6 th out of the last seven years we have had full funding for the Program. For the 3 rd consecutive year we have executed 98% or better. Despite 2019 flood, 2019 govt shutdown, COVID.

#### HREP

- Completed feasibility for one project
- Initiated design on two projects
- Completed design on four projects
- Initiate construction on three projects
- Completed a construction stage on two projects
- Continue construction on eight projects
- These projects represent an additional 65,000 acres of habitat
- Restoration potential over the next 10 years.
- Completion of the Identification and Selection of the Next
- Generation of HREP Projects. Utilizing the recently completed
- HNA II, that was co led by the USGS, US F&W Service and the
- Corps, the River Teams identified and developed 16 Projects

LTRM

- Continued our baseline data collection and analysis of fisheries, aquatic vegetation and water quality resources across the system and made it publicly available. This occurred despite numerous challenges related to COVID.
- Completed the decadal Land Cover/Land Use imagery collection.
- Furthered program integration through active participation of LTRM staff on HREP study teams as well as through broader participation of HREP practitioners in the bi annual science meetings to identify and prioritize science proposals for FY 20.
- Draft of the 3 rd Status and Trends Report which will provide invaluable insight to the Program, partners and the UMRS. Additionally, this document is foundational to the 2022 Report to Congress

FY21 Plan of Work



## FY21 PLAN OF WORK



	<b>Budget</b>
<b>TOTAL FY21 Program</b>	<b>\$33,170,000</b>
<b>Regional Administration and Program Efforts</b>	<b>\$ 1,250,000</b>
Regional Management	\$ 1,000,000
Program Database	\$ 100,000
Program Support Contract (UMRBA)	\$ 100,000
Public Outreach	\$ 50,000
<b>Regional Science and Monitoring</b>	<b>\$10,400,000</b>
LTRM (Base Monitoring)	\$ 5,000,000
UMRR Regional Science In Support Rehabilitation/Mgmt. (MIPR's, Contracts, and Labor)	\$ 3,800,000
UMRR Regional (Integration, Adapt. Mgmt.)	\$ 200,000
Habitat Evaluation (split between MVS, MVR, MVP)	\$ 1,125,000
Report to Congress	\$ 275,000
<b>District Habitat Rehabilitation Efforts (Planning and Construction)</b>	<b>\$21,520,000</b>
Rock Island District	\$ 7,020,000
St. Louis District	\$ 7,125,000
St. Paul District	\$ 7,275,000
Model Cert.	\$ 100,000



Upper Mississippi Restoration Program



## UPPER MISSISSIPPI RIVER RESTORATION PROGRAM



**Execution:**

- WRDA 2020 \$55,000,000 authorization
- FY 21 Program - \$33,170,000/\$10,210,113      30.7%
  
- FY 21 Regional Program - \$2,950,000/\$631,774      21.4%
  
- FY 21 MVP HREP - \$7,275,000/\$766,898      10.5%
- FY 21 MVR HREP - \$7,020,000/\$993,670      13.3%
- FY 21 MVS HREP - \$7,125,000/1,490,050      20.9%
- FY 21 LTRM - \$8,800,000/\$6,327,721      71.9%

**HREP Design/Construction:**

- Harpers Repair (MVP) – BCOES sign-off late-Jan
- McGregor Lake (MVP) – Construction will resume in spring
- Conway Lake (MVP) – Construction physically complete
- Keithsburg Stage II (MVR) – PDT addressing 100% review comments
- Steamboat Stage I (MVR) – VE scan scheduled for Jan 15th
- Crain’s Island (MVS) – Ongoing construction (photo)
- Clarence Cannon (MVS) - Ongoing construction (photo)
- Ted Shanks (MVS) – Reforestation (photo)

**HREP Feasibility:**

- Lower Pool 10 (MVP) – Preparing for TSP Milestone meeting (Feb)
- Steamboat (MVR) – Final approval routing for signatures at MVD
- Lower Pool 13 & Green Island (MVR) – started DQC review of Chapters 1-3
- West Alton Islands (MVS) – Planning charette scheduled for January & February 2021
- Oakwood Bottoms (MVS) – Final Draft Report Submitted to MVD for approval 4 Dec

**LTRM:**

- FY21 LTRM SOW and budget development complete, funded
- FY 21 UMRR Science in Support of Restoration & Monitoring SOW first increment funded
- FY21 UMRR LTRM biennial component meeting will be held remotely, dates 30-31 March



Marshall Plumley –

- Harpers repair not a normally budgeted activity
  - o We are working through this
- Conway is ahead of schedule
- 2021 a big year for project completion 2-3
- Steamboat may be into construction in place of Keithsburg if there are problems
- Huron Island 2<sup>nd</sup> round of aquatic vegetation planting completed.

Karen Hagerty –

- Slides will be presented at UMRR-CC
- Overflow money from Science fund
  1. Stable states –Standalone piece of Danelle Larson’s proposal
  2. 2-4 funding people through their proposals

## WRDA 2020 Update from Marshall Plumley



# WRDA 2020 CHANGES TO UMRR



SEC. 308. UPPER MISSISSIPPI RIVER SYSTEM ENVIRONMENTAL  
MANAGEMENT PROGRAM.

Section 1103(e) of the Water Resources Development  
Act of 1986 (33 U.S.C. 652(e)) is  
amended—

- (1) in paragraph (3), by striking “\$22,750,000” and inserting “\$40,000,000”;
- and
- (2) in paragraph (4), by striking “\$10,420,000” and inserting “\$15,000,000”.

HREP \$40,000,000 + LTRM \$15,000,000

\$55,000,000



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### LTRM Implementation Planning

- Opportunity to address currently unmet information needs for the
- UMRS and further integration of the UMRR Program elements.
- UMRR Management Team discussions.
- A process analogous to what was done for previous strategic plans.
- We will seek the UMRR CC' guidance in assembling that group.
- Facilitation.
- We intend to introduce this idea to the UMRR CC in February.

### Marshall Plumley-

- Only brought 2 slides for 45 minutes so hoping for conversation
- WRDA passed after being stuck in with omnibus appropriations and COVID relief
- Raises authorized amount for program to \$55 million
- Authorization is NOT appropriation
- Change does present an opportunity to think about what a more robust program looks like
  1. What needs are not met?
  2. What would make LTRM and the program as a whole more effective?
- Important to note that the overall pie of natural resources funding hasn't increased. We just “might” have a chance at a bigger piece of pie.
- Want to stress that we need to temper expectations

- Because of the potential magnitude of change and our partnership assessment of needs is important
  1. Process likely to be similar to strategic plans
- Will be seeking facilitation similar to the 2010-2014 LTRM plan

Jeff Houser –

- Discussed several facilitators - one facilitator suggested thinking about what impact you want to have and think backward from that
- We are not revising the 2015-2025 strategic plan we are filling in under it

Jennie Sauer – That was very helpful background information

Karen Hagerty – this represents a big opportunity and having plans in place makes competition for money more effective for example LiDAR

Andrew Stephenson – we have a head start in discussion due to strategic planning we have in place

- Brian Stendquist (MNDNR) is a potential facilitator

Marshall Plumley – If you have other facilitator recommendations let me know.

Matt Vitello - The Macroinvertebrate discussion dovetails into this one nicely.

Scott Gritters – I am an antiplanner. Concerned about cost of new planning. Can we look at existing plans for unmet goals and objectives/components etc.

Marshall Plumley – Great suggestion to mine other documents

Matt O’Hara – I agree with Scottie we have planned for times with flush funds before

Jennie Sauer – When talking to facilitators brought up many planning documents, new objectives, changing old objectives etc. All must be considered

Karen Hagerty – We have collected a lot of data we couldn’t analyze and have an opportunity here

Andrew Stephenson – Recent meeting produced summaries of older documents that show needs etc.

Megan Moore – Noted as a sidea potential floodplain forest compenent that Jeff Houser indicated he had on his list. I also agree with other states and appreciate Marshalls comments slowing down the approach to potential funds.

Dave Herzog – Bodes well for consistency and continuity of whole group now and in the past that put us in this position.

Jeff Houser – We just completed what I was going to cover in my agenda slot.



## Macroinvertebrates – Shawn Giblin

Shawn Giblin (see embedded presentation above)

- Fits nicely with previous topic
- Recent publications have indicated decline
- Invertebrate Subgroup Participants: Steve DeLain(MN DNR), Scott Gritters (IA DNR), Shawn Giblin (WI DNR), Jim Lamer (IL NHS), Molly Sobotka (MDC), Jessica Fulgoni(MDC), Brian Gray (USGS), Ross Vander Vorste(UW-La Crosse)
  1. Scott and Steve took part in pre-2004 sampling
  2. Brian provided statistical expertise
- 2 Meetings in 1 week to keep fresh in mind
  1. Monday Dec 14, 2020. Two hour meeting to scope the issue.
  2. Friday Dec 18, 2020. Two hour meeting to come to consensus on 1-3 recommendations regarding UMRR invertebrate monitoring.
    - No action necessary was considered a potential recommendation.
    - Each agency came to this meeting with 2-3 recommendations for the group to consider.
- Five Major Themes (additional detail in embedded presentation)
  1. Reinstate Macroinvertebrate sampling
  2. More and More Targeted Sampling
  3. Add Contaminant/Toxin Sampling
  4. New Research Focal Area
  5. Greater Taxonomic Resolution

Formal Recommendations to UMRR Analysis Team:

1. Reinstate LTRM macroinvertebrate monitoring for five years beginning in 2022 using the same methods employed prior to 2004. Modifications to the prior methods would include:
  - Open River protocols related to site selection will be modified to account for large number of sites that can't be successfully sampled.
  - Mayfly samples will be retained in case further taxonomic and tissue analysis if desired.
2. Develop a new research focal area (3.4): Understanding factors affecting the distribution and abundance of benthic invertebrates. Potential factors to explore could include:
  - neonicotinoids
  - pyrethroids (bifenthrin)
  - other current-use pesticides
  - climate change (physical/geomorphic/hydrologic)
  - cyanotoxins
  - increasing hypoxia
  - improving water quality
  - substrates changes
  - wind speed and direction during major hatches



Shawn Giblin – Brian Gray suggested change to 5 years to improve statistical power

- Open River folks will have to modify site selection
- Suggest retaining mayflies for tissue analysis

Questions from A-Team Reps (post-recommendation)

- Staffing-How will it work for people and time?
  - Who will do further mayfly taxonomic work if moved forward?
  - Compatibility of Open River Pre/Post if site selection altered?
  - Statistics-Appropriate number of years to reinstate for?
  - How well could faucet snails be tracked?
- 
- The recommendation to develop a macroinvertebrate focal area for the next science meeting is a good one and I am happy to work with the subcommittee and UMRR partners to develop that focal area. **Yes, we would like to see this developed.**
  - I think the first recommendation (restarting the macroinvertebrate component) still needs additional information behind it before it can be effectively and fully considered. The rest of my comments and questions are intended help develop that information.
  - It is important to have a clear goal, specific information need(s), or main question(s) stated to clarify the purpose of restarting the invertebrate component. My guess is that it is something like “Since 2004 has the invertebrate abundance changed enough that we should be concerned”. Is that the most important question the sub-committee believes will be addressed with data from a reinstated macroinvertebrate component?

**The overall goal of continuing collection of the LTRM invertebrate component will be to measure the magnitude and direction of trends (i.e., negative, positive, none) in abundance of these particular invertebrates over time and compared to previous LTRM data. Although recent evidence using radar imagery suggests that mayfly abundance in the Upper Mississippi have been reduced by 52% (2012-2019; Stepanian et al. 2019), there is no percentage decline known that indicates an ecologically significant change to the population or ecosystem processes (e.g., secondary production). We are proposing to reinstate invertebrate collection using methods that will facilitate direct comparison to the previous record of collection and will be statistically robust to detect a temporal trend in invertebrate abundances.**

**We need this data to begin to asking relevant questions about these invertebrates.**

- If so:
- How much is “enough that we should be concerned”? That is, how small a change do we need to be able to detect with three years of data for this to be worth doing? 50% change? 25% change? 10% change? Will we be able to detect a change of that size with reasonable confidence with the existing design? I believe if minimum size of the change that needs to be detected can be specified, we could determine the probability of being able to detect that change using the existing macroinvertebrate data. Bear in mind that this won’t be a long-term

trend analysis, but a comparison of years 1993 – 2004 and (for example) 2022 to 2024. **We are well aware of this.**

- Which macroinvertebrates should be included? Just mayflies? Everything that was measured previously (if so, why?). Should additional taxa be included? Why or why not? **Add faucet snails. Distinguish between dead/alive.**
- Does an initial 3 (5) year pilot study need to be conducted in all 6 study reaches? **Yes, but OR sampling design would be reworked.**
- If not, what is the main question (or information need) that should be addressed? Will restarting the component produce that information? Is it the best way to produce that information?
- Members of the sub-committee raised various issues and made suggestions for changes to the invertebrate component in the full recommendations document (Invert\_SubGroup\_Full\_Recommendations.docx). How are those issues and suggestions going to be addressed? **These could be addressed under the new focal area.**
- What is the estimated cost of doing this? The cost of the macroinvertebrate component for 2004 was \$210,900 which is ~ \$290,800 in 2021 dollars. But additional conversations would be needed with all field stations to assess what they would need to conduct full macroinvertebrate sampling. Related questions include: **Does this include startup cost? Is 4% inflation customary? Other similar expenditures have been less fruitful.**
- What, if any, additional staff will be needed at field stations? MN, MO and IA felt it could be accomplished with existing staff. **Poll FS's.**
- What equipment will need purchased? **MO has everything, MN does (borrow mussel boat), WI does- remount. IA- remount. IL- Needs table/sieves.**
- Who will assume leadership of the pilot study / component? **Would someone on the UMESC staff accept it as a "stretch assignment". Fund Jess Fulgoni (MO)?**
- The absence of macroinvertebrate data within LTRM since 2004 is a notable omission in the program, and there is clearly an interest in addressing that omission. I am interested in discussing whether restarting the macroinvertebrate component as it was is the best way for addressing existing macroinvertebrate information needs (see my above questions aimed at clarifying that information need).
- Restarting the macro invertebrate component for three years would be a substantial investment. We need to be thoughtful about if and how to do so effectively. What priority is restarting the invertebrate component compare to other efforts that might be undertaken with those resources such as (simply as examples here), focused invertebrate studies specifically designed to address pressing questions related to macroinvertebrates, additional geomorphology / bathymetry, floodplain forest, or freshwater mussel work? **Those areas are being addressed. Inverts are coming up continually in focal areas research. An original component that should come back. Stepaninan paper raises flags.**
- Is restarting the macroinvertebrate component the best way to address the most important questions at hand? Yes
- As we will discuss on Monday, we need to begin assessing partnership information needs in the context of possible increases in UMRR appropriations given our recent increase in authorization. Macroinvertebrates are clearly an important part of that discussion, but there are other parts that need to be kept in mind.

- I've attached the macroinvertebrate component assessment report written by Jennie Sauer in 2005. It is a good reference document for this discussion as it moves forward.

#### Discussion

- Need to focus on pre- post- comparisons

Jennie Sauer – Originally Mayflies, fingernail clams then added Zebra Mussels, then added presence/absence and abundance for everything.

- Sauer 2005 report has good history.

Shawn Giblin – I read the report. It was well written

Megan Moore – Didn't see a criticism of restarting the component being timeframe of sampling.

Deanne Drake - Prior to 2004/5 were there additional specialists at the field stations specifically dedicated to inverts? Or was invert sampling taken care of by Fish/Veg/WQ?

Jennie Sauer – Timing was a mix of before hatches and when staff were free.

Shawn Giblin – Sampling window of May 1 – June 14<sup>th</sup> and shifted as it moved south

Scott Gritters - One field staff member did sampling 5-7 days depending on weather

- Worked up sample on way to the next site
- Rarely took anything back
- Continued surveys for a few years to provide fingernail clam data for US FWS

Steve DeLain – Timeframe is critical on Pepin due to periods of calm winds

Nick Schlessler – Were all samples processed on the water?

Steve DeLain – 10-15% were brought back to the lab for QA/QC

Scott Gritters – lots of zeros in the data

- Cover lots of water then sampling would slow if they hit a "lively" sample

Karen Hagerty – Did you collect "other" site data. Related to Shawn's question about sampling water, sediment, etc.

Jennie Sauer – Yes, categorical site data and vegetation presence absence

Shawn Giblin – The thought was to reinstate sampling and address further questions from there

Lauren Silvado – UMRBA has macroinvertebrate sampling

- Finishing pilot
- May be able to work on joint program
- If it is are their others to partner with?

Shawn Giblin – component puts more emphasis on soft sediments community instead of in the drift with a Hester Dendy.

Karen Hagerty – opportunity to share or improve would be fantastic because I remember the open river had issues with sampling

Jennie Sauer – different species, lots of sand, and high flow in the open river affected Ponar data (lots of zeros)

Dave Herzog – Open river had recognized issues from day one

- Masters student focused on those difficulties
- Strongly supports resurrection – has student and white paper inputs

Matt O’Hara – Illinois supports resurrection with changes and caveats mentioned

- Lots of changes in the last 16 years
- Flooding, changes in deposition, Asian Carp, etc
  - o Want Jim Lamer and John Chick to have input

Steve Winter – USFWS generally is supportive, and is particularly supportive of faucet snail and fingernail clams as a focus

Shawn Giblin – Faucet snails were added to the list based on this recommendation

Nick Schlessner – do the southern changes affect comparability and if so do we need to address these changes

John Chick - Suggest doing southern sampling with old methods to check for changes before changing protocol

Dave Herzog – Recommends a proposal be developed by the group for presentation to the A-Team

Karen Hagerty – Would it make more sense to reinstate as a pilot to address concerns before modifications?

Jeff Houser - I am concerned each group may be anticipating different things from a restart.

Karen Hagerty – I agree and feel that we need to look at funding

Nick Schlessner – I agree we need to lay out a budget.

Karen Hagerty – In absence of additional money this would replace other science work and should be put through a prioritization process.

Shawn Giblin - Group would not be opposed to developing a proposal.

Jennie Sauer – Use the same proposal as science meeting.

John Chick – Need a bit more time to drag out and test old equipment as well

Shawn Giblin – The window of people with past experience in the program is closing

Karen Hagerty – Who would lead the component?

Jennie Sauer – This would be part of the proposal being developed.

Shawn Giblin - Does LTRM do stretch assignments?

Jennie Sauer – Currently at UMESC staff is 100% or more booked.

Shawn Giblin – Maybe Jess Fulgoni?

Dave Herzog – Would need to have a conversation on staff in Missouri.

Neal Jackson –

- Seems to me there are two paths, one is the LTRM side and the other is the science support side. Are you talking about proposing adding the component to LTRM or proposing a pilot for science funding. Each would have a different path for funding it seems.
- If a pilot project is the path forward, what would you learn from a pilot that would help make the decision of whether to add the sampling as a component? What is the future decision context?

Karen Hagerty – 2021 is currently maxed out. In the future may be able to compete for funds from additional pots

Jennie Sauer – Currently is difficult to add because LTRM base went over already on its budget.

Marshall Plumley – I agree with Karen. Because the program is fully funded it is about tradeoffs and what priority work is.

Shawn Giblin – Subgroup is willing to for go other things to bring the component back.

Scott Gritters – I think this will be ranked high by most or all agencies.

Nick Schlessner – DO we need to rank this in a science meeting?

Jeff Houser - Lots of advantages to running through a science proposal.

Kathi Jo Jankowski – Science meeting prep is a good way to approach

Steve DeLain – identified lots of river changes that will need to be addressed (new communities etc)

Steve Winter – Proposal is a good approach

Jim Lamer – Proposal a good idea

Megan Moore – Very little cost to do project in May (minor costs)

- Who is going to be PI?
- Maybe could still do work in May 2022 with funding in time for analysis work,

John Chick – Funding works through university.

Deanne Drake – Worried COVID will push projects into a restart.

Dave Herzog – I think we could process samples.

Jeff Houser – Two ideas: developing a proposal and when to consider the proposal.

Shawn Giblin – Will update A-Team as proposal is developed (Update will be added to A-Team Agenda)

Jeff Houser – No need for a specific focal area recommendation

- I will listen in on discussions to facilitate development of the focal area

Jim Fischer –

- Ask the field stations to think about tradeoffs at field stations (what won't get done?)
- When dropped stations said they were busy and the sampling limited other work.

Karen Hagerty – Encourage mention of UMRBA sampling and how information can be leveraged.

Shawn Giblin – We can do that.

Karen Hagerty – For Jennie and Jeff – the past component had a PI with costs

Jeff Houser – will need to be sorted out during the proposal process

Shawn Giblin – Will contact field stations for equipment and availability

## COVID Updates

MN updates:

- No changes
- Vaccination proceeding (months off for many staff)
- Maybe no interns in 2021

WI updates:

- No changes
- Maybe no seasonals in 2021

IA updates:

- No changes
- ~30% in office and 70% at home
- Massive increase in use

IL updates:

- No changes
- Hybrid work
- Jim Lamer – Planning on similar to 2020
- John Chick – 50/50 office/home by day offset scheduling and spreading over 10,000ft<sup>2</sup> of office space

MO update:

- No change
- Cos on near list
- 2 internal cases despite masking

USFWS updates:

- No changes

UMESC updates:

- No changes
- Water quality lab folks staggered at lab
- Waiting on federal orders from executive orders

USACE updates:

- No change in Rock Island
- Some vaccinations

### Wrap up

Jennie Sauer – Dave Bierman can pass on the thanks of the group to Mel Bowler who retired recently.

Nick Schlessler - Can you fill that position?

Dave Bierman – Hopefully. Kyle Bales is also moving to the Corps so Iowa will have two positions to fill.

Shawn Giblin motioned to adjourn and Matt O’Hara seconded with unanimous approval.

Follow up note on the Charter approval process:

After submitting the approved charter language (voted on in the meeting) to the UMRR CC they had a meeting discussing the changes and sent a response to me with two suggestions:

- 1) Remove the line “e.g., through operationalizing adaptive management at the project or larger scale” from the A-Team’s responsibility #7, as additional conversations are needed regarding how the program will define adaptive management prior to operationalizing.**
- 2) A potential rewording for Role #3 was suggested as “3. Advise the UMRR CC regarding the technical implications of decisions affecting LTRM, including policy, programmatic, and budget matters.”**

When I presented the comments from the UMRR CC to the A-Team representatives the proposed changes caused several representatives to raise concerns. I attempted to address the concerns and develop set of options capable of producing text acceptable to all parties. The text of the e-mail I produced is included on the next page, but was not completely successful. The final approval of language will hopefully occur at the upcoming spring meeting of the A-Team.

Hi all,

Just following up on the e-mail I sent last week. Several folks have responded with potential concerns and others with acceptance of the current language so since we are short on time I want folks to know where we sit.

The three concerns that have been expressed revolve around:

- 1) The perceived conflict between the last sentence of the introductory paragraph (specifically the highlighted section), with role and responsibility #3.  
“The A-Team serves as an advisory body to the Upper Mississippi River Restoration Coordinating Committee (UMRR CC) and advises the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) and the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) on technical issues that do not raise policy or budgetary concerns.”

“3. Advise the UMRR CC regarding the technical implications of policy, programmatic, and budget decisions affecting LTRM.”

I think the current language has a subtle but important difference in meaning where the first paragraph implied that the role of the A-Team is not to initiate changes requiring policy or budget changes while #3 implies that we are tasked with relaying potential implications of such changes if they were to occur. That being said one potential solution would be to end the introductory paragraph at technical issues such that it would read:  
“The A-Team serves as an advisory body to the Upper Mississippi River Restoration Coordinating Committee (UMRR CC) and advises the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) and the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) on technical issues.”

- 2) Wisconsin has raised a concern about specific responsibility #6:  
“6. Ensure that perspectives of interested stakeholders and members of the public are considered by the team at its regularly scheduled meetings, as directed by the UMRR CC.”  
In particular they worry that the highlighted section implies a lack of independence to bring forward perspectives from stakeholders separate from UMRRCC direction. As I recall this was language added to relieve the A-Team from a prior responsibility to address stakeholders and the public at regularly scheduled meetings. Again this concern could likely be addressed by striking the highlighted language above. This would in no way limit the UMRR CC from passing on concerns from the public and could alleviate concerns Wisconsin has about the independence of the A-Team in the charter language.
- 3) Expressed by the UMRR CC (green text below) the third issue revolves around specific responsibility #7:  
“7. Promote integration of HREP and LTRM. e.g., through operationalizing adaptive management at the project or larger scale.”



UMRR CC comment:

“Remove the line “e.g., through operationalizing adaptive management at the project or larger scale” from the A-Team’s responsibility #7, as additional conversations are needed regarding how the program will define adaptive management prior to operationalizing.”

Again this issue can be addressed by striking the highlighted text above. No concerns were voiced by any state/agency representative about this last change so I will plan to present that change on Wednesday.