

**Minutes of the
Upper Mississippi River Restoration
Environmental Management Program
Coordinating Committee
(UMRR-EMP CC)**

**November 20, 2013
Quarterly Meeting**

**Crowne Plaza Riverfront Hotel
St. Paul, Minnesota**

Tim Yager of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. on November 20, 2013. Other UMRR-EMP CC representatives present were Mark Moore (USACE), Mike Jawson (USGS), Dan Stephenson (IL DNR), Diane Ford (IA DNR), Kevin Stauffer (MN DNR), Jim Fischer (WI DNR), and Ken Westlake (USEPA) via phone. A complete list of attendees follows these minutes.

Yager announced that Kevin Foerster was named USFWS's Region 1 Chief of Refuges, starting in December. Yager will serve as acting Refuge Manager of the Upper Mississippi Refuges and will co-chair UMRR-EMP CC's meetings.

Minutes of the August 28, 2013 Meeting

Karen Hagerty requested that Chuck Theiling be added to the list of USACE science project delivery team (PDT) members included in the first paragraph of page A-5. Hagerty also requested that "science coordination" be inserted following LTRMP in the first sentence of the last paragraph on page A-7. Doug Blodgett said that Roger Perk, rather than himself, responded to Kevin Foerster's question in the last sentence of the fifth paragraph on page A-10. With these edits, Kevin Stauffer moved and Diane Ford seconded a motion to approve the draft minutes of the August 28, 2013 meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

Program Management

FY 13 Report Out

Hubbell recalled that FY 13 was a very unique, opportunistic, and challenging year. He said Headquarters released its FY 13 work plan for USACE on June 26, 2013, following the passage of the full-year FY 13 continuing resolution authority (CRA) on March 26, 2013. Thus, UMRR-EMP's final FY 13 appropriation was not known until the fourth quarter. Hubbell said considerable uncertainty in UMRR-EMP's FY 13 appropriation throughout most of the fiscal year made internal budget planning very challenging. In addition, UMRR-EMP's FY 13 final allocation of \$24,131,160 was 42 percent above its planning amount of \$16.986 million. Under UMRR-EMP's FY 13 budget of \$24.13 million, program allocations were as follows:

- Regional Management — \$676,000
- LTRMP — \$5,129,000

- HREPs — \$18,326,640
 - Program model certification and regional support — \$150,000
 - MVP — \$5,564,234
 - MVR — \$8,448,172
 - MVS — \$4,164,234

[Note: In FY 12, MVP transferred \$600,000 to MVS. The FY 13 allocations to MVP and MVS above reflect repayment.]

Hubbell highlighted several important milestones for UMRR-EMP in FY 13, including:

- Continued development of the program’s database
- Major upgrades to the program’s website, including enhanced usability and graphics
- A new process for developing LTRMP’s annual scopes of work and budgets
- Strategic planning for the program’s science and restoration efforts in FY 2015-19
- A newly-formed USACE science project delivery team to identify common science priorities among all three UMR districts as well as enhance transparency and maintain a systemic perspective in the program’s science work
- Spring flooding resulting in about \$7 million to \$8 million in damages to HREP sites
- UMRR-EMP CC endorsement of the 2103 UMRR Implementation Issues Assessment
- UMRR-EMP CC adoption of the Joint Charter of the UMRR-EMP CC, A-Team, and HREP Sequencing Teams
- A June 19 program briefing to OMB staff
- A June Bassmasters’ Tournament in La Crosse where UMRR-EMP was able to leverage significant outreach opportunities

Hubbell emphasized the partnership’s tremendous work in efficiently and effectively implementing habitat and science projects in an especially uncertain budget year. At year-end, the program obligated 99.5 percent of its \$24.13 million appropriation. Hubbell applauded USGS and USACE staff for their exceptional contributions in the last few days of FY 13. He explained that, on September 30, immediately prior to the October 1-16 federal government shutdown, guidance was issued that USACE staff could use any FY 13 carry-over funds to continue work on UMRR-EMP during the shutdown. USACE and USGS staff worked quickly in collaboration to transfer \$600,000 of FY 13 carry-over funds back to USACE. This allowed for continued work on HREPs in all three Districts including maintaining their construction schedules and that will allow for letting two new construction contracts in FY 14. In addition, the field stations worked diligently with assistance from USACE staff to collect long term fish and water quality data. Other work included development of an HREP monitoring design handbook, which will facilitate more detailed comparative analyses among projects. Hubbell said that, since the 16-day federal government shutdown directly affected partner federal agencies, some collaborative efforts were delayed — e.g., UMRR-EMP strategic planning.

FY 14 Appropriations Status and Work Plan

Hubbell said the President’s FY 14 budget request and Senate Appropriations Committee’s FY 14 energy and water spending measure include \$31.986 million for UMRR-EMP. The House approved

\$30.369 million in FY 14 funding for the program. These funding levels are near the program's authorized annual amount of \$33.17 million.

Hubbell said the federal government is currently operating under a CRA that expires on January 15, 2014. He reported that USACE Headquarters issued guidance that UMRR-EMP's planning level under the current CRA is 5 percent less than the President's FY 14 request — i.e., \$30.369 million. Mike Jawson asked whether that planning level would hold should Congress enact another full-year CRA or if it would be UMRR-EMP's last appropriated funding level of \$17.787 million. Hubbell explained that the typical planning level under a given CRA is the lesser amount of the President's request or House or Senate's appropriations measures. For FY 14, that would be \$30.369 million, which coincidentally equals the planning level. Hubbell also noted that funds have already been distributed to USGS and the states for FY 14. Dru Buntin observed that the Administration demonstrated its willingness to shift funds to UMRR-EMP to fund its planning level.

Hubbell outlined UMRR-EMP's FY 14 internal allocations under a \$30.369 million budget, as follows:

- Regional Management — \$1,000,000
- LTRMP — \$5,225,000
- HREPs — \$25,743,000
 - Program model certification and regional support — \$1,000,000
 - MVP — \$6,980,400
 - MVR — \$10,532,200
 - MVS — \$7,230,400

[Note: At the end of FY 13, funds were transferred among Districts to get critical work accomplished and to maximize the amount of funds obligated. The FY 14 HREP allocations to all three Districts reflect rebalancing of those internal transfers.]

Jim Fischer asked why regional administration is being budgeted significantly more than in past years. Hubbell explained that UMRR-EMP is being required to absorb a greater portion of District-wide administrative support and other overhead costs since other programs/projects' budgets are being decreased or defunded. Fischer expressed support for increased funding for public outreach.

Hubbell reiterated that the hard work of UMRR-EMP's collective partnership provides the program with the capability to execute at high funding levels for ongoing years, implementing critical restoration, monitoring, and analysis.

Long Term Resource Monitoring Program

Product Highlights

Mike Jawson said the Department of the Interior was greatly impacted by the October 1-16, 2014 federal government shutdown. Jawson said UMESC was virtually closed, with the exception of a few staff to take care of the animals at the Center. Wisconsin DNR staff that are housed at UMESC had to find office space at another location. Jawson expressed appreciation to field station staff who continued to carry out their monitoring work.

Jawson presented LTRMP's accomplishments in FY 13's fourth quarter. Jawson reported that the Great Rivers Field Station published a manuscript analyzing the water quality and fish data collected in Pool 26 from 1994 to 2004. Jawson said Wisconsin DNR published a summary of its 2012 Pool 8 monitoring data and other empirical data in comparison to historical trends. Hagerty said these summaries reveal

important information, and it is planned that all field stations will begin doing annual monitoring summaries. Jawson said USGS updated the online viewer for LiDAR data, which is available at http://www.umesc.usgs.gov/data_library/gis_data/lidar.html. In addition, Jawson listed the many individual contributions to outreach and assistance to internal and external stakeholders.

Jim Fischer observed that the additional activities are extremely valuable and show how science happens — i.e., the importance of interactions for information transfers. However, while important, these contributions are difficult to portray in a budget context.

USGS-UMESC Science Leadership for UMRR-EMP

Mike Jawson discussed partners' responses to UMESC's survey regarding the future of UMRR-EMP's scientific leadership. The survey was distributed to partners on July 30 and included various questions about the program's current and future science leadership needs, including desired outputs and outcomes. The survey was distributed to 194 individuals that work with UMRR-EMP of which 36 responded. The respondents included representation from all partner agencies, NGOs, and others. Jawson provided the following observations of the survey results:

- Science leadership should be targeted to the partnership; however, there are several other external stakeholders that benefit from the program's science leadership, including nonprofits, other basin states, universities, legislators, and any entity influenced by or influencing the program's efforts.
- The role or purpose of the UMRR-EMP's science leadership should be to collaborate; coordinate; provide vision, direction, and guidance; motivate; question; manage; inform; plan; and interpret data and other information.
- Desired outcomes include information, questions, objectives, evaluations, management, decisions, products, knowledge, effectiveness, priorities, and planning.
- Sixty percent of respondents said the current outputs and reporting formats are not meeting their needs, while 40 percent said the outputs are meeting their needs. Of those who said yes, the desired outputs and reporting formats include data, tools, reports, fact sheets, web-based tools/applications, manuscripts, and analyses. Of those who said no, they indicated a desire for more help with accessing and using the data for management decisions, habitat suitability modeling, and tying together multiple components. In addition, those respondents would like more understandable information as well as more applied information, cause-and-effect relationships, Illinois River information, more location/topic-specific information, spatial analyses, and models and decision tools to directly support managers.
- Desired approaches for UMESC's science leadership are primarily to collaborate, coordinate, and communicate. In addition, desired approaches include more support to, and integration with HREPs; adaptive management; management-oriented; status quo; action; landscape-level leadership; syntheses; scientist-led; less-management, more leadership; and final authority.

Jawson concluded that respondents generally expressed a desire for UMESC to function more as a science consultant or advisor rather than the textbook definition of a leader, which is to show direction, align and influence, and motivate and inspire. In addition, there is a desire for products to be more user friendly and for greater support to HREPs. Jawson acknowledged that the survey was not scientific and said UMESC staff will continue to interpret the results.

Diane Ford thanked Jawson for employing the survey, noting that the process may be difficult but is very valuable. In response to a question from Ford, Jawson said he will send the raw data and list of respondents to the UMRR-EMP CC members. Ford asked if the survey will be used to inform the current strategic planning effort. Jawson said the survey will be used in strategic planning, but it was

primarily meant as a tool for the program's science planning. Hubbell said he prefers that the strategic planning team reviews the survey results. In response to a question from Hubbell, Jawson explained that, in the survey's context, outcome meant the desired endpoint or goal and output meant the product/activity that will help achieve the outcome. However, Jawson explained that those terms were not defined in the survey. Fischer said the survey responses are useful to consider, but expressed caution against reacting too quickly to the results. He acknowledged that the survey was not scientific and there were limited respondents. Fischer also recognized the program's many bright, motivated scientists that we need to ensure are supported. He said bureaucratic processes may prevent them from doing important, innovative science.

LTRMP Science Coordination Meeting

Hubbell said a science coordination meeting is being planned for late February or early March 2014. The meeting will be held over three days, starting at noon on the first day and ending at noon on the third day. Hubbell explained that this meeting will be the initial step in developing a programmatic science plan, which was called for in the FY 2010-14 LTRMP Strategic Plan. Discussions at this first meeting will focus on current science knowledge, critical science questions, opportunities for science that directly relates to habitat restoration, and future LTRMP scopes of work. Partners will also explore how best to integrate the program's various science functions such as objective setting, base monitoring, indicators, habitat monitoring protocols, and more. Johnson said this meeting will serve as the first step in the program's Science Coordination Process, with information sharing about ongoing work and discussions about the 3-year science plan. That 3-year plan will inform annual work plans and serve as a coordination mechanism.

Hubbell said read ahead materials will be developed to focus the coordination meeting's discussions. Fischer expressed support for read ahead materials to help partners prepare for the meeting and requested that the materials be distributed well in advance of the meeting. Johnson added that program researchers will be asked submit a one-page update sharing any learned insights and the meeting will include presentations with greater detail. Fischer suggested that the program's planners and engineers also be invited to participate in the meeting, as a way of eliminating the communication gap.

In response to a question from Kirsten Mickelsen, Hubbell said the meeting dates have not yet been identified. USACE and USGS staff and lead scientists are currently working to set the date, and will announce it shortly. He said partners can contact him or Barry Johnson with any questions related to the meeting.

USACE LTRMP Report

Karen Hagerty said the *ad hoc* LTRMP funding group continues to serve as a forum for partners to discuss budget development. The funding group includes Hubbell and Hagerty (USACE), Johnson and Jennie Sauer (USGS), Tim Yager and Bob Clevestine (USFWS), Walt Popp (Minnesota DNR), John Chick (Illinois Natural History Survey), Diane Ford (Iowa DNR), Janet Sternburg (Missouri DoC), Sara Strassman (Wisconsin DNR), and Mickelsen (UMRBA). In addition, other partners are invited to participate on the team's calls as needed.

Hagerty said the FY 14 budget development process is more straightforward than previous years where the program was planning at various appropriations scenarios. LTRMP is allocated \$5.225 million in FY 14. The states, UMESC, and USGS were asked to base their FY 14 budget requests on their respective FY 13 budget. In addition, individual field stations' travel is being capped at \$1,000.

Hagerty reported that the *ad hoc* LTRMP funding group met via conference call on September 4, 2013 to discuss any adjustments made to UMESC's, USFWS's, and the states' budgets as well as work

priorities. Hagerty said the funding group concurred with the A-Team's recommendations for funding priorities, including necessary equipment refreshment (\$164,131), field station staffs' travel-related expenses to the LTRMP science coordination meeting (\$8,000), and land cover/land use (LC/LU) processing (remaining funds). Any additional funding would be allocated to support the top priority UMRR science proposals. Hagerty explained that, with the estimated \$209,997 in FY 13 carry-over funds, \$153,000 would be available for LC/LU processing.

Hagerty said the *ad hoc* LTRMP funding group is planning to consider future impacts to staff in sustained low funding, the group's potential roles/strategies in addressing low funding, and any relevant recommended action items included in the 2013 Implementation Issues Assessment (IIA). Hagerty acknowledged that a \$5.225 million LTRMP allocation is not sufficient to fully implement base monitoring and that low funding for multiple years is creating significant constraints. She said partners will need to continue to discuss how to address this issue.

Hagerty said USACE and USGS LTRMP managers and the A-Team Chair will convene a call on November 21, 2013 to select which options warrant development of full proposals for funding consideration. It is anticipated that the final funding options will be selected by January 30, 2014. Fischer noted that the project selection process calls for UMRR-EMP CC's review of the A-Team's recommendations. The A-Team had planned on presenting its recommendations to the UMRR-EMP CC at today's meeting. He asked whether the Committee's input will be requested at this point. Stauffer agreed with Fischer's comments and said he would encourage the Committee's review of the proposals. Hubbell said UMRR-EMP CC's input would be valuable at this time. He said the federal government shutdown compressed the schedule. He noted that projects must be completed within the fiscal year and so any delays would further shorten the completion timeframe. Dru Buntin asked if there is an expedient option to share the A-Team's recommendations to the UMRR-EMP CC members and solicit their input, perhaps a brief overview of the top proposals at today's meeting. To avoid any substantial delay and allow for UMRR-EMP CC's review, Mickelsen suggested that Hagerty send a list of the FY 14 LTRMP funding proposals to the UMRR-EMP CC members tomorrow. Hagerty agreed, and the Committee members agreed to respond within one week with any input. The full proposals will then be presented to the UMRR-EMP CC for concurrence at its February 26, 2014 meeting.

Jim Fischer noted that Wisconsin DNR's FY 13 LTRMP carry-over was the result of reduced overhead costs due to the Department's internal reorganization and the retirement of a long-term accountant. Fischer said the carry-over amount is a rough estimate and he will notify USACE of the actual amount shortly.

Fischer acknowledged that increments of LTRMP's base monitoring have been cut several times in the past in the face of funding constraints, reducing its overall capabilities. For example, the program had previously monitored for macroinvertebrates and tributaries. Fischer said the partnership needs to discuss the long term challenges and issues associated with reducing base monitoring over time. Hagerty agreed, and suggested that the strategic planning team discuss this issue.

A-Team Report

On behalf of Rob Maher, Fischer provided the A-Team report. He said the A-Team has reviewed and ranked partners' proposals for FY 14 LTRMP science funds. The A-Team has not met since the UMRR-EMP CC's August 28, 2014 quarterly meeting.

LTRMP Highlight: UMRR-EMP LTRMP Monitoring Data as a Foundation for Learning about a Large, Complicated Ecosystem

Jeff Houser illustrated how the program's long term data can be used to improve implementation and understanding of restoration actions, diversify the program's management toolbox, and identify

emerging threats to the UMR ecosystem. Houser explained that the program's efforts to better understand the UMRS lead to immediate and future applications. Immediately, insights gained about the system are used to enhance implementation and understanding of current management actions. Longer term, a better understanding of the system allows for innovative techniques, actions, or strategies that diversify our management toolbox. In addition, it allows for identifying emerging and potential threats to the ecosystem.

Houser explained that UMRS research faces scientific challenges. One, the UMRS is unique and there are no control options to reference significant analyses. Two, the river system is highly variable temporally (seasonal and long term) and spatially (longitudinal and latitudinal). However, there are ecological approaches and technical methods that are used in combination to address these challenges. Scientists use theory/modeling, long term observation, comparative study, and ecosystem experiments to better understand the UMRS.

Houser provided examples of how LTRMP data and associated research have showed how habitat restoration projects might impact total suspended solids (TSS) patterns and dynamics and the implications of nutrient distribution on the UMRS ecological condition. Houser said that, while we might expect TSS to be lower in backwaters than in the main channel, monitoring has indicated that this is not always the case. In fact, LTRMP data has shown that TSS is higher in backwaters than the main channel during low discharge in the summer, likely due to greater wind and wave fetch and less aquatic vegetation in the main channel. Higher backwater TSS is now rare in LTRMP's study reaches where vegetation is abundant, but still occurs in those reaches where vegetation is scarce.

Houser said the program's long term data set now allows for realizing these relationships. He stressed that short term analyses must be treated with caution. Houser explained that LTRMP's monitoring data set now spans a broad range of discharge and vegetation conditions making it possible to yield important discoveries about unexpected patterns. As the data set continues to grow, our ability to detect and understand unexpected patterns will improve. Houser explained that the results about TSS show that creating a "backwater-like" habitat can be affected by river discharge and vegetation. During low discharge, TSS may be higher in the "backwater-like" areas than in the main channel, especially if vegetation is scarce.

Houser explained that excessive nutrient concentrations (i.e., phosphorus and nitrogen) lead to blue-green algal blooms and duckweed/filamentous algae mats (i.e., metaphyton). Blue-green algae blooms become abundant under low nitrogen-high phosphorus conditions. The blooms decrease aesthetics and food quality and release toxins. When conditions are favorable (i.e., low current velocity and submersed aquatic vegetation present), dense surface mats of metaphyton can form that reduce light penetration and dissolved oxygen below the mats, impede recreational uses, and may impact submersed aquatic vegetation. LTRMP data show that nitrogen is high in channels and low in backwaters, conversely phosphorus is low in channels and high in backwaters. Thus, blue-green algal blooms mostly occur in backwaters, where there are low nitrogen-high phosphorus conditions. LTRMP data indicate that this pattern is consistent throughout the UMRS.

In conclusion, Houser said LTRMP data provide clear explanations of spatial and temporal patterns; information on processes influencing these patterns, especially when combined with additional analytical approaches; and spatial and temporal context for short term studies and evaluations.

Jeff Stoner observed that the UMRS is a highly complex and unique system and said information transfer is important within the system and with other large river systems. Stoner asked if information exchanges are occurring with other systems. Houser explained that this science is fairly new and the UMRR is on the forefront. These questions are being researched on the Danube River and so there are opportunities to exchange information there. Mike Jawson asked how this research may help to enhance

HREPs. Houser explained that each HREP has a unique design and each are informed in different ways. He said LTRMP staff can be a resource for integrating science knowledge into habitat projects. Jawson said this highlights the need for an extension agent to show how the science can be applied in individual HREPs. Hubbell said the findings on nutrients can be used to inform HREP designs, in general, to not exacerbate the issues — e.g., avoid aggregating a blue-green algae situation with project designs. Houser recognized that UMRR-EMP's data set is easily and largely publically accessible. Scientists are available to help locate and use the data.

Habitat Rehabilitation and Enhancement Projects

District Reports

St. Louis District

Brian Markert said MVS is continuing to work with MVD to advance Rip Rap Landing. The project's land acquisition cost exceeds the 25 percent cap on acquisition cost relative to total project cost. The District's other planning priorities include Clarence Cannon, Piasa, and Eagles Nest Islands. The latter includes a passive design for working with the river to create islands. Markert said MVS and Missouri DoC have divided Ted Shanks into multiple construction awards in order to advance the project under various funding levels. The District is advancing construction on Ted Shanks, Pools 25 and 26 Islands, and Batchtown, which is nearing completion. The evaluation report for Stump Lake is finalized and will be available on UMRR-EMP's website shortly. Calhoun Point is the District's next evaluation priority.

St. Paul District

Marv Hubbell said MVP is finalizing Harpers Slough's definite project report and anticipates designing all three stages of the project and awarding a construction contract for the first stage all in FY 14. MVP is addressing cost share issues associated with North and Sturgeon Lakes and is exploring other design options. Other planning priorities include Conway Lake and McGregor Lake. The District will complete Capoli Slough this spring and host a dedication in late summer.

Rock Island District

Hubbell said MVR's planning priorities are Pool 12 Overwintering Stage II, Huron Island, and Beaver Island. The District's top priority is repairing flood damages to Lake Odessa and adding a spillway to enhance the project's resiliency to flooding from the Iowa River. MVR is also addressing flood damages to Fox Island and Rice Lake. Hubbell showed pictures of the historic flooding on the Illinois River in spring 2013. He said the District's other construction priorities include Pool 12 Overwintering Stage I, Fox Island, and Rice Lake Stage I. Hubbell said that, while the past spring/summer floods limited the number of construction days, the program was still able to execute at nearly 100 percent. This is attributable to the strength of the partnership, flexibility in allocating funds, and extraordinary hard work and diligence of those working on the projects.

Planning New Project Starts for 2017

Hubbell said that, with increased UMRR-EMP funding for restoration work, it is projected that new project starts for planning will be needed in FY 2017-18. Following the FY 2015-19 UMRR-EMP strategic planning process, the UMRR-EMP CC will initiate a "data-driven" process for selecting new starts that will be informed by the strategic plan and other program documents and decision support tools. Hubbell said goals for the selection process will include a) applying systemic data layers and

research and monitoring efforts, b) developing and applying appropriate models, c) applying other decision support tools, and d) refining reach objectives to direct the application of those tools and data.

Hubbell said he will soon seek specific input from UMRR-EMP CC members on the project selection process and then, with partner input, develop a detailed schedule and approach. Future UMRR-EMP CC meetings will focus on developing the process.

Jim Fischer expressed support for linking past efforts and for the selection process goals, especially for making the process more data-driven. He said models alone will not be sufficient to provide the information needed and the process will require other decision support tools and data. Mike Jawson agreed with Fischer's comment, and said partners will need to make value judgments about the model outputs.

Emiquon Preserve Floodplain Restoration Project

Hubbell recalled that, at UMRR-EMP CC's August 28, 2013 meeting, he gave an overview of the Emiquon Preserve Floodplain Restoration Project and discussed the possibility of transferring the project from the Section 206 authority into UMRR-EMP. Emiquon Preserve is owned by TNC as part of the Emiquon Complex, and is adjacent to USFWS's Chautauqua and Emiquon Refuges as well as Dixon Mounds State Museum. The estimated cost for the floodplain restoration project as designed exceeds Section 206's total project cost limit. Project plans are nearly complete and it would be construction ready within a relatively short timeframe. Hubbell said the total project cost is estimated at \$18 million. But since the planning is essentially completed, the cost to UMRR-EMP would be \$4.2 million for construction and \$250,000-\$350,000 to complete its definite project report, project partnership agreement, and plans and specs. Hubbell said this project would fill one of the two spots that partners reserved for habitat projects on the Illinois River in the reach planning process.

Hubbell said Illinois DNR submitted a letter in September 2013 approving the project transfer to UMRR-EMP. Since then, USACE staff have evaluated and confirmed the adequacy of the project's pump station design. Hubbell said this would be UMRR-EMP's first project cost-shared with a nonprofit. TNC plans to showcase Emiquon Preserve as a centerpiece of its North American water initiative. Hubbell said that, pending UMRR-EMP CC's approval of the transfer, it is anticipated that project construction would likely begin in the first half of FY 16. He said a slight delay in Huron Island Stage III would be the only implication to MVR's current project sequence.

Doug Blodgett said TNC hopes Emiquon will serve as a model for future non-federal sponsored water resource projects. In addition, TNC is implementing adaptive management on the project that will inform future floodplain connectivity restoration efforts. There are defined targets and criteria to evaluate project success. Hubbell noted that, as a recommendation in the 2013 Implementation Issues Assessment (IIA), the UMRR-EMP CC supported considering projects with a nonprofit cost share sponsor. In the IIA, the UMRR-EMP CC recognized that there would be several implementation questions to resolve. However, in this case, Hubbell said USACE and TNC have already addressed these questions in the project's planning under the 519 program.

Diane Ford said Iowa is supportive of this project moving forward under UMRR-EMP. However, she expressed concern with the potential precedent this would set given that the project was not evaluated through the program's established project identification and sequencing process. Hubbell agreed that the concerns are valid, but recalled that the 2008 reach planning process left two placeholders for Illinois River projects and partners have been working to identify those projects. Ford expressed support for Emiquon filling one of those placeholders since that is what the partnership agreed to do. She said the project will be a great opportunity for the program.

Jim Fischer expressed support for UMRR-EMP implementing the Emiquon floodplain restoration project, particularly for having nonprofits involved as a cost share sponsor. Fischer asked if there may be important elements missing in the project's design since it did not go through review by the District-based partner planning teams. Hubbell explained that the project has been under consideration for several years in Illinois. He said there has been a lot of debate about how the Emiquon floodplain restoration project should be formulated and its role on the Illinois River. Blodgett recognized that, with more experts now focused on the project, there are opportunities to continue to modify the design. He reiterated that the project has undergone substantial review. There is significant interest in the Emiquon Preserve; it is a RAMSAR wetland and is one of the most studied wetlands. TNC has, and continues to, monitor and model the project area. Since the project is undergoing adaptive management, there is a willingness to make modifications to the project design in response to the monitoring results. Blodgett explained that the ecological response to TNC's efforts at Emiquon to-date has been positive, and said TNC thinks that this project can do substantially better in partnership with USACE and UMRR-EMP, in particular. TNC hopes that this project can create a better model for floodplain restoration.

Dan Stephenson said Illinois had shared Fischer's concerns until USACE and TNC explained how the project has been formulated and reviewed as well as opportunities to modify the design. Illinois now supports the project moving forward under UMRR-EMP. Kevin Stauffer said Minnesota supports the project's advancement under UMRR-EMP. Stauffer said he hopes that this project will lead to more restoration projects involving a nonprofit cost share sponsor.

Ken Westlake said the project is adjacent to USFWS refuge lands and Illinois DOT wetland bank mitigation lands, noting that the project is part of a much larger integrated habitat complex for a wide range of species.

In response to a call for a motion from Tim Yager, Stephenson moved and Fischer seconded a motion to endorse the advancement of the Emiquon restoration project under UMRR-EMP. The motion passed unanimously. On behalf of the UMRR-EMP CC, Yager said the Committee is looking forward to this new collaboration with TNC and enhancing the habitat on the Illinois River.

Program Bulletin

Public Outreach Committee

Marv Hubbell recalled that, at its August 28, 2013 meeting, the UMRR-EMP CC agreed to form a public outreach committee to identify and implement outreach opportunities for the program. Thus far, the committee includes Randy Hines from USGS and Jody Christenson from NRCS. Tim Yager said he will contact Hubbell with one or two USFWS staff to participate on the committee. [Note: Following the meeting, Sharonne Baylor of USFWS volunteered to serve on the committee.]

Our Mississippi – UMRR-EMP Edition

Hubbell said that, in response to UMRR-EMP CC's support at its August 28, 2013 quarterly meeting, USACE is developing the edition of *Our Mississippi* specifically devoted to UMRR-EMP. The edition will reflect the breadth of the program, including featuring the diverse array of program partners.

“Fly-Over” Mapping Tool

Hubbell said COL Mark Deschenes suggested UMRR-EMP develop an interactive geospatial “fly-over” mapping tool of the UMRS system that would highlight UMRR-EMP projects and partner offices, including the field stations. The mapping tool would utilize Google Earth and would cost approximately \$10,000 to develop.

UMRR-EMP Strategic Planning

Hubbell reported that, due to the federal government shutdown, the November 5-7, 2013 UMRR-EMP strategic planning session was canceled and rescheduled for January 6-8, 2014. The January 2014 session will consider a revised draft plan and how best to engage the broader partnership in the near future.

Planning for Member Agency Leadership Meeting

Hubbell said an event with UMRR-EMP partner agencies' upper level leaders is being planned for Wednesday, June 18, 2014 in Dubuque. The event will include a discussion session and a tour of Pool 11 Sunfish Lake. The group of volunteers planning the event will finalize basic logistics and distribute "save-the-date" invitations soon. Dan Stephenson said he would like to extend an invitation to Illinois' Lieutenant Governor's Regional Office. Diane Ford said she would like to invite Iowa's Governor's Office Regional Liaison. Dru Buntin suggested that Dubuque Mayor Roy Buol, who co-chairs the Mississippi River Cities and Towns Initiative (MRCTI), be invited to the event. In response to a question from Mike Jawson, Hubbell said COL Mark Deschenes will host the event. Brig. Gen. Peter DeLuca will be invited.

UMRR-EMP Database

Hubbell said District staff continue to develop the UMRR-EMP Database. So far, it has received positive feedback for gathering information about projects and associated funding that is useful for Congressional outreach. Hubbell asked for any feedback on the Database's features and overall usefulness. Ford said the Database is a very valuable tool, and suggested that it includes economic value data on the natural resources being restored. She said the Governors and agencies leaders are focused on economic value. There are several resources at our disposal, including USFWS's new study on the economics of its refuges and Iowa's economic studies on natural resources. Jim Fischer agreed, and said MRCTI is also interested in assessing the economics of the river's natural resources.

Fact of the Quarter

Hubbell said UMRR-EMP is directly implemented out of 13 offices, including three USACE districts, six field stations, three USFWS offices, and UMESC.

Public Involvement and Outreach

Jim Fischer said Jeff Janvrin is working with Wisconsin DNR's Central Office to create a YouTube video showcasing UMRR-EMP's restoration work. Wisconsin DNR is developing a layperson's article on Pool 8's "state of the ecosystem." Fischer said the Mississippi Parkway Committee, which includes all states along the Great River Road, is exploring key elements of the river and linking economics, ecology, and river restoration. He said there is a potential to highlight UMRR-EMP.

Mike Jawson suggested that a display of UMRR-EMP is included at the upcoming dedication of the Genoa fish hatchery and visitors center. Yager expressed support for the suggestion.

Hubbell said Janvrin and Chuck Theiling are currently working on a summary report of constructed HREPs to submit as a manuscript. He said the results could be included in the 2016 UMRR-EMP Report to Congress.

Yager said Rich King gave a boat tour of the island restoration in Pool 9 to Friends of Pool 9 and other public organizations and individuals. Yager said USFWS staffs the Brownsville overlook and is prepared to talk about UMRR-EMP and its efforts in Pool 9.

Other Business

Future Meetings

The upcoming quarterly meetings are as follows:

- **February 2014 — Quad Cities**
 - UMRBA Board — February 25
 - **UMRR-EMP CC — February 26**

- **May 2014 — St. Louis**
 - UMRBA — May 13
 - **UMRR-EMP CC — May 14**

- **August 2014 — La Crosse**
 - UMRBA Board — August 5
 - **UMRR-EMP CC — August 6**

[Note: Subsequent to the meeting, the location for the August 2014 quarterly meetings was changed to Peoria.]

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:42 a.m.

**UMRR-EMP CC Attendance List
November 20, 2013**

UMRR-EMP CC Members

Mark Moore	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVD
Tim Yager	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, UMR Refuges
Mike Jawson	U.S. Geological Survey, UMESC
Dan Stephenson	Illinois Department of Natural Resources
Diane Ford	Iowa Department of Natural Resources
Kevin Stauffer	Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
Jim Fischer	Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
Ken Westlake	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 5 [By phone]

Others In Attendance

Derek Ingvalson	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVP
Terry Birkenstock	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVR
Tom Crump	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVR
Tom Hodgini	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVR
Marvin Hubbell	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVR
Karen Hagerty	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVR
Ken Barr	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVR
Brian Johnson	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVS
Brian Markert	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVS
Kat McCain	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVS
Matt Cosby	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVS
Jeff Stoner	U.S. Geological Survey, Midwest Region
Jeff Houser	U.S. Geological Survey, UMESC
Walt Popp	Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
Jeanne Daniels	Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
Tom Boland	AMEC
Bill Sypchalla	Barr Engineering
Don Powell	SEH Inc.
Olivia Dorothy	Izaak Walton League
Brad Walker	Missouri Coalition for the Environment
Doug Blodgett	The Nature Conservancy
Dru Buntin	Upper Mississippi River Basin Association
Dave Hokanson	Upper Mississippi River Basin Association
Kirsten Mickelsen	Upper Mississippi River Basin Association