

**Minutes of the
Upper Mississippi River System
Environmental Management Program
Coordinating Committee**

**August 8, 2001
Summer Quarterly Meeting**

**Radisson Hotel
La Crosse, Wisconsin**

Charlie Wooley of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. on Wednesday, August 8, 2001. Other EMP-CC members present were Steve Cobb (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers), Scott Stuewe (IL DNR), Kevin Szcodronski (IA DNR), Steve Johnson (MN DNR), Gary Christoff (MO DOC), Terry Moe (WI DNR), Linda Leake (USGS), Dave Carvey (NRCS), and Al Ames (MARAD). A complete list of attendees follows the minutes.

Minutes of the May Meeting

Steve Johnson moved and Terry Moe seconded a motion to approve the draft minutes of the May 16, 2001 meeting as written. The motion carried unanimously.

Program Management

FY 01 Fiscal Performance Update

Roger Perk reported that, as of June 30, 2001, FY 01 EMP expenditures totaled \$11.5 million. Scheduled expenditures for the year are \$20.4 million. Perk noted that the HREP program is in the midst of its construction season and said the EMP is in a good position to achieve 99 to 100 percent of scheduled expenditures by the end of the fiscal year.

Proposed FY 02 Allocations

In response to a question from Terry Moe, Greg Ruff said funds will be allocated to the Independent Technical Advisory Committee (ITAC) in FY 02. While the EMP authorization specifically authorizes up to \$350,000 annually for the ITAC, Congress appropriates EMP funds as a lump sum. In the event that the EMP is not fully funded, Ruff said ITAC would still receive some funding, though not necessarily its pro-rated share of the overall funding. Moe said he would not favor allocating funds to the ITAC unless the HREP and LTRMP components were fully funded.

Moe requested a report on HREP monitoring and evaluation at the November EMP-CC meeting. He expressed particular interest in the bio-monitoring results. Perk offered to focus the November HREP showcase on monitoring and evaluation. In response to a question from Moe, Don Powell explained that plans and specs are reflected under construction in the EMP spreadsheet.

Perk presented a preliminary plan to allocate FY 02 appropriations, assuming an appropriations amount of \$21.0 million (see attached). Perk explained that the plan assumes HREP funds would be allocated among the three districts based on the current river mile formula; uses the standard split between HREPs and the LTRMP; assumes a 10.6 percent savings and slippage rate; and includes funding for the IATC, public involvement plan, Report to Congress (RTC), and Fish and Wildlife Service coordination work. According to Perk, the districts will face some HREP funding limitations in FY 02, even at the \$21.0 million EMP funding level approved by the House. The impacts would be more severe at the \$19.0 million level passed in the Senate.

Moe asked about the “regional management” line item in the preliminary allocation plan. Ruff said it covers the time Corps district staff spends working on the program as a whole, rather than on specific projects. Steve Cobb said these costs could also be described as program management expenses. Several state members suggested that “program management” would be a better label for the line item. In response to a question from Robin Grawe, Perk said non-federal sponsors may only apply their project-specific costs to their cost share contribution. Steve Johnson expressed his opinion that the next RTC should not cost as much as the first report. He urged that the existing template be used and updated as needed. Perk said he shares Johnson’s desire to keep the RTC costs down, but said he has not yet scoped what will be needed.

Perk reviewed the potential impacts of various budget scenarios on specific projects within the three districts. In MVP, the Harpers Slough project is in question at the \$21.0 million funding level. Both Ambrough Slough and Harpers Slough would be affected if appropriations are below \$21.0 million. Moe noted that Ambrough Slough is a cost-shared project and asked the Corps to work closely with Wisconsin in the event changes are required as a result of insufficient funding. In MVR, construction of the Pool 11 Islands project is likely to be affected even at the \$21.0 million level. If funding drops below this, additional projects in the planning, design, and evaluation phases would be affected. Perk noted that the Princeton Refuge and Rice Lake projects do not make MVR’s list at the \$21.0 million level. If additional money was available, Rock Island could initiate construction on these projects in FY 02. Moe noted that Pool 11 Islands has already been delayed for years and expressed concern that it would be further delayed while additional money is spent on Lake Chautauqua. Perk said construction is already underway at Lake Chautauqua, while Pool 11 Islands would be a new start. In MVS, construction on Batchtown Phase II would be scaled back at the \$21.0 million level. If appropriations fall below \$21.0 million, virtually all projects in the planning, design, construction, and evaluation phases would be affected. Perk noted that Schenimann Chute and Calhoun Point are deferred even at the \$21.0 million level.

Keith Beseke questioned the wisdom of launching the ITAC and public involvement efforts in FY 02 if the appropriations appear to be insufficient to support the core EMP elements.

Kevin Szcodronski asked why MVS's HREP program is so dramatically affected under the funding scenarios. Perk attributed this to the district's large contracts and relatively smaller portion of the HREP allocation. Deb Foley further explained that, if MVS receives 25 percent of the HREP total based on the river mile allocation formula, the entire amount will be consumed by a single contract in FY 02. Moe suggested focusing the limited resources on HREP construction and the LTRMP, deferring work in areas such as project evaluation. Perk observed that evaluation helps to focus and inform the program. He also stressed the importance of continuing planning and design work to keep projects in the pipeline and position the program for potential funding increases in the future.

Perk emphasized that the impacts on specific projects under the different funding scenarios are preliminary estimates. Perk said he would anticipate changes as the districts review their options and coordinate further. Steve Cobb explained that Corps personnel will meet in approximately two weeks to review the HREP program and determine how best to allocate funds among the districts given the anticipated fiscal constraints. Cobb said considerations will include the allocation of funds between the program's core elements (i.e., HREPs and the LTRMP) and other work, including the ITAC and public involvement. Cobb said the Corps will coordinate with the program partners after this meeting.

PCA Template

Deb Foley distributed a proposed model project cooperation agreement (PCA) based on the Ambrough Slough PCA. Changes from previous PCAs include provisions for work in-kind, language regarding future obligations, and new Department of Labor requirements regarding Davis-Bacon prevailing wage and Copeland anti-kickback provisions. Foley briefly reviewed the Davis-Bacon requirements and noted that the requirements do not apply to work that the states do with their own staff. She asked the state EMP-CC members to provide her with comments on the proposed model PCA by September 14. Foley will then communicate with the EMP-CC as needed regarding further revisions and will submit the proposed model to Corps headquarters for approval.

Long Term Resource Monitoring Program

Ken Brummett reported that the A-Team formed a work group to review the pros and cons of fisheries monitoring alternatives. He also noted that UMESC's LTRMP milestones table should prove quite helpful. The A-Team's next meeting is scheduled for October.

Linda Leake briefly summarized the LTRMP's FY 01 program. Monitoring and analysis consumed approximately 90 percent of the \$5.3 million FY 01 allocation. Budgets for the monitoring components were increased by 3 percent for inflation. Field station budget increases and equipment replacement were quite limited. Several priority projects were funded at low levels. Leake highlighted FY 01 accomplishments in the areas of monitoring, bathymetry and hydrology, land cover/land use (LC/LU), priority studies, and analysis. Those efforts include an annual monitoring report, bathymetric data to support HREPs and pool planning, completion of 2000 LC/LU for key pools, deep channel fish research, analysis and interpretation of monitoring data, and vegetation modeling. Leake distributed a summary of FY 01 analysis projects and said Leslie Holland-Bartels would welcome questions on the summary.

Evaluation of the current fish monitoring component and consideration of potential modifications is on-going. Leake said Holland-Bartels will make a recommendation regarding the fish component at the EMP-CC's November meeting. In response to a question from Jon Duyvejonck, Leake said USGS is still determining how it will obtain partner input between now and the November EMP-CC meeting. Leake told Terry Moe that the target for implementation of any modifications has not been set and will be the topic of discussion at the next EMP-CC meeting.

Leake reviewed the strategy for using savings and slippage and other money in excess of baseline funding. She reminded the committee that, as part of the LTRMP restructuring plan, it was agreed that items dropped from the program would come back in priority order as additional funding became available. Priorities include timely completion of priority platforms, such as the HNA and 2000 aerial photography; integrative, predicative assessments; emphasis on efficiency; and increased systemic knowledge and integration of program talents. Leake detailed how additional funds have been expended to-date.

Leake reported that USGS will begin its FY 02 planning process for the LTRMP within approximately two weeks. The core LTRMP requires approximately \$4.8 million. The planning process will look at how to spend any increment between \$4.8 million and the FY 02 allocation. Under the \$21.0 million EMP funding scenario, the LTRMP would receive \$5.8 million. Moe stressed the importance of working with the field stations on FY 02 planning, noting that the fiscal year begins quite soon. Moe also expressed concern that uncertainties regarding possible changes to the fisheries monitoring component will make it difficult to complete the field station cooperative agreements. Given that Holland-Bartel's fisheries monitoring recommendation is not expected until November 2001, Moe suggested delaying implementation of any changes in the monitoring protocol until FY 03. Leake said she would convey Moe's concerns to Holland-Bartels, but noted that the fisheries review has been on-going for two years. Leake emphasized the need to bring the review to closure and get on with implementing any changes that are to be made.

Coordinating the EMP with Watershed Efforts

Norman Senjem described the Basin Alliance for the Lower Mississippi in Minnesota (BALMM), a group that includes federal and state agencies, local units of government, and various private interests. BALMM is a collaborative effort to protect and improve water quality in southeastern Minnesota. Senjem, an employee of the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, coordinates the group. He highlighted key basin characteristics, including intensive agriculture, Karst topography, high value trout streams, and frequent exceedances of standards including turbidity and fecal coliform. BALMM has identified strategies in the broad areas of watershed management, aquifer protection, and floodplain management. Specific land use strategies include perennial vegetation, wetland protection and restoration, soil conservation on row crop land, residential land management, nutrient and pesticide management, animal feedlot management, and aggregate mining management.

Senjem stressed the importance of exploring connections between BALMM's basin focus, the resulting work that is being done in individual watersheds, and Upper Mississippi River management efforts such as the EMP. He sited Pool 8 as an example, comparing BALMM's

strategies that may affect the Blue Lake area of Pool 8 with the pool plan that is under development. BALMM's focus for the area includes urban land management, wastewater treatment and stormwater improvements, and upland erosion reduction. Senjem observed that many of these efforts could complement goals outlined in the draft Pool 8 plan, including improving wading bird and fish spawning habitat, reducing sedimentation, and managing impacts from urban development. He identified a range of potential implementation mechanisms, including the EMP, pool drawdowns, total maximum daily loads (TMDLs) on tributaries for total suspended solids and turbidity, and targeting buffer strips.

Senjem cited the pending TMDL for turbidity in the Vermillion River bottoms as another opportunity to coordinate work in tributary watersheds with work on the UMR floodplain. He described the complex interconnections between the Vermillion bottoms and the mainstem UMR. Construction, agriculture, streambank erosion, Mississippi River floods, and wind resuspension all contribute to the bottoms' turbidity problem. The area is currently listed as an impaired water due to turbidity and the consequent impacts on aquatic life. The Minnesota PCA and DNR are currently scoping a study of the area. According to Senjem, potential source reduction strategies include reducing sediment resuspension through drawdowns and island building, bank stabilization measures, protecting the Vermillion bottoms from heavy sediment loads during Mississippi River flooding, erosion control on croplands, and managing nutrients from agricultural and urban sources. Senjem urged coordination between the Vermillion Bottoms TMDL effort and pool planning. He suggested that the definition of aquatic life impairment from turbidity might need to be broadened and said some pool management efforts could help to reduce turbidity in the bottoms.

Senjem invited ideas from EMP-CC members regarding opportunities to enhance coordination. Marian Havlik observed that conditions in Pool 8 cannot be adequately addressed without reducing streambank erosion on the Root River. Scott Whitney said the Corps is very interested in making connections between its work on the floodplain and watershed efforts. Tim Schlagenhaft said water quality on the tributaries is very important to pool planners. He suggested setting minimum water quality targets for the tributaries.

In response to a question from Dan Stinnett, Senjem said Minnesota does not currently have an ambient nitrogen standard, though there is a drinking water standard. Senjem explained that the state is developing an ambient standard for phosphorus and may turn to nitrogen after that, though he noted that the biological foundation for such a standard is not well-established. Senjem said most nitrogen comes from agricultural sources and that reductions in use have been difficult to achieve. Larry Shepard reported that EPA Region 7 currently has a task force working on nutrient water quality criteria. The group has focused initially on criteria for lakes and reservoirs. It will turn to small streams next, and then to larger rivers. Shepard said the effort so far has been difficult, with significant public opposition to setting numeric criteria for nutrients. Shepard suggested that challenges such as nutrient criteria and standards for sedimentation underscore the need for interstate coordination on UMR water quality issues. He expressed hope that the UMRBA's new water quality project will provide some of the needed coordination.

Independent Technical Advisory Committee

Greg Ruff distributed a summary of comments he has received on the draft plan for the ITAC. Ruff highlighted several themes from the comments, including the following recommendations:

- The ITAC should advise at the program level and not review individual projects or take on an oversight role.
- Some members should have specific knowledge of the UMR and the EMP.
- The ITAC should be free to structure its own meetings and set its own agendas.
- ITAC findings should be provided to the EMP-CC at the same time they are transmitted to the Corps.
- ITAC activities should not lengthen the HREP implementation process.

The draft plan has not yet been revised based on the comments received. Ruff said he will prepare a revision and ask UMRBA staff to distribute it to the EMP-CC. MVD's intention to implement the ITAC in FY 02 has not changed. Ruff said all EMP expenditures will be carefully reviewed, but he reminded EMP-CC members that Congress clearly directed the Corps to establish the ITAC.

Terry Moe said he has yet to see a clear problem statement identifying the issues that the ITAC is intended to address. Ruff agreed that Congress simply directed establishment of the group and did not provide much guidance regarding its composition, focus, etc. Ken Lubinski reminded Moe that NGOs and others have raised concerns that the HREP program has pursued site-specific, rather than systemic, benefits. Lubinski said Congress intends the ITAC to ensure that the habitat projects make sense systemically.

Gary Christoff asked whether the ITAC authorization is perpetual and suggested that the program partners could make recommendations regarding the committee in the next Report to Congress. Steve Cobb agreed that the RTC might afford an opportunity to recommend changes if they prove warranted.

In response to a question from Scott Stuewe, Ruff recalled that program partners were invited to identify candidates for the ITAC at the May EMP-CC meeting. Cobb said MVD has not started contacting candidates and will not do so until Corps headquarters has approved the ITAC plan. Cobb and Ruff said that, in the interim, it would still be helpful for EMP-CC members to submit names of potential ITAC members. Linda Leake expressed concern that the ITAC not duplicate the function of the LTRMP's Science Advisory Committee.

Ruff reiterated MVD's basic precepts regarding the ITAC, including that the committee will function as an advisory group, making recommendations for programmatic improvements. It will not have any oversight authority and will not review individual projects. The group will advise the Corps, but MVD plans to make the ITAC's recommendations available simultaneously to the program partners.

Flood-Related Impacts

Roger Perk reported that flood damage assessments are largely completed for HREPs in MVP and MVR. However, projects in MVS have not yet been fully assessed due to continued high water. According to Charlie Wooley, preliminary reports from Dick Steinbach indicate that the MVS HREPs are in fairly good shape. Keith Beseke emphasized that the projects in MVP and MVR fared quite well and credited the Corps for its excellent design and construction work. Beseke said the flood was an 80 to 90 year event along much of the UMR NWFR. With a flood of this magnitude, a large area was inundated and lots of material was moved around. He noted that some of the HREPs are designed to be inundated during much smaller floods.

According to Beseke, the most costly damages from this spring's flooding were at Long Lake, Pool 8 Islands Phase II, and Spring Lake (IL). The Service accepted the completed Long Lake project this past winter. During the flood, material beneath the structure moved. Several options for addressing the undermined structure are being considered, and the rough costs of repair are estimated at \$350,000. Beseke emphasized that the damage must be addressed in some way, even if a decision were made to abandon the HREP. The experimental seed humps at Pool 8 Islands Phase II were blown out in the flood. Beseke said this damage provided a good lesson regarding where this technique should and should not be used. Costs to harden breaches where the sand humps eroded are estimated at \$100,000. The electric control house at Spring Lake was lost and the cross dike was breached near the spillway when the river rose faster than the spillway could handle. Costs for repair, including relocating the electric control house on a telephone pole, are estimated at between \$300,000 to \$500,000. Beseke noted that the Spring Lake hemi-marsh was breached during a previous flood while the project was under construction. Design changes were made and the hemi-marsh performed well during this spring's flooding.

Beseke reported that the Service does not yet know how much, if any, supplemental funding it will receive to repair flood damages on its refuges. He said the outcome of the FY 01 supplemental fund will largely determine the Service's ability to make flood repairs on HREPs. Terry Moe asked for an estimate of total flood damages. Beseke said the current estimates of identified damages are approximately \$1 million. But he emphasized that these estimates are rough and may change as approaches to addressing the repairs are refined.

According to Perk, the Corps' current efforts to address flood damages include preparing reports and assessments, conducting site inspections, identifying HREPs that require repairs, and developing guidance. Issues include defining what items fall under routine operation and maintenance (O&M) and what ones constitute rehabilitation. In particular, there are questions surrounding whether dredging to remove material deposited by flood waters should be considered rehabilitation. If so, how much dredging can reasonably be classified as rehabilitation? Perk observed that these policy decisions will have both near and long term impacts on HREP funding. He said that previous guidance is vague on the question of cost-sharing for rehabilitation. Perk is working with MVD and headquarters staff to resolve these policy questions.

Kevin Szcodronski stressed that every flood-damaged HREP will present different issues, opportunities, and challenges. He suggested that, in some cases, project partners may want to

modify the initial design when repairing the HREP. He cautioned that rigid guidance on HREP rehabilitation could inhibit needed flexibility. Wooley concurred that any guidance should permit adaptive management of projects. Wooley said flexibility is key to making the best use of available resources. Szcodronski said it is important to have a long term perspective and look at the system of projects comprehensively when making rehab decisions. He said there may be some situations in which repair costs would be quite high and resources would be better spent constructing a new project. In such circumstances, Szcodronski said consideration should be given to abandoning the project. He emphasized that other damaged projects will be well worth rehabilitating, perhaps with design improvements.

Steve Cobb said he appreciates the importance of flexibility. He agreed with Szcodronski that there will likely be tradeoffs to make between rehabilitating existing projects and constructing new ones. Cobb and Greg Ruff explained that MVD will not be seeking broad headquarters guidance or review of specific project rehabilitation decisions. Instead, it will ask for guidance on the specific matter of how to proceed with rehabilitation on projects where the PCA does not address rehab cost sharing.

Terry Moe repeated his request from the May EMP-CC meeting for information on how head differential projects performed in the flooding, relative to other types of HREPs.

Other Topics

Missouri River Mitigation Funding Transfers

Following up on Gary Christoff's question from the May EMP-CC meeting, Gary Loss reported that the Corps transfers money to states to execute projects under the Missouri River Fish and Wildlife Mitigation Program. States also operate and maintain the projects at 100 percent federal expense. Loss attributed the 100 percent federal funding for construction and O&M to the program's status as a mitigation project. Kevin Szcodronski concurred with Loss' description.

Reopening Projects

In response to Tom Boland's question from the May meeting, Roger Perk advised that HREP sponsors wishing to reopen a project should submit a fact sheet to the appropriate district-level work group (i.e., FWIC, FWWG, or RRAT).

October EMP Workshop

Mike Thompson recommended that the EMP workshop, previously planned for October, be postponed until March of next year. He based his recommendation on difficulty securing hotel arrangements and uncertainty regarding federal agency budgets so close to the start of the new fiscal year. Thompson said the last two weeks of March are under consideration for the two-day workshop. Steve Johnson advised Thompson to be sure to avoid any conflicts with the UMRCC's annual meeting. Ken Brummett encouraged Thompson to avoid downtown hotel locations.

Draft WRDA Language for NGOs as Cost-Share Partners

Roger Perk reported that the Corps is considering draft language for the 2002 Water Resources Development Act that would allow NGOs to serve as non-federal sponsors for HREPs. Scott Whitney said the provision would parallel authority that the Corps has to work with NGO partners in several of its other environmental programs. Whitney and Steve Cobb said potential NGO partners include the Nature Conservancy, Ducks Unlimited, and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. According to Whitney, Corps headquarters' concerns with such a proposal would likely include the capacity of such organizations to make credible O&M commitments.

Holly Stoerker expressed her belief that such a modification to the EMP authority should be considered by the partnership as part of the periodic Report to Congress process. She cautioned that having the Corps pursue the change unilaterally may create difficulties for the other program partners. In particular, she noted that offering a specific amendment in WRDA would open the program authority up to other amendments. She urged that such changes be pursued as part of an overall strategy developed in the RTC process.

Terry Moe asked how NGO-sponsored projects would fit with the HREP prioritization process. Perk said they would go through the same process as all other projects. Scott Stuewe asked whether such a change would modify the partnership deliberation process. He also cautioned that NGO-sponsored projects could have the impact of shifting a state's project opportunities. Gary Christoff expressed support for examining ways to make program resources go further. Dan McGuinness said he views the proposal as a way to expand overall opportunities, not as an effort to redirect the program. McGuinness said the National Audubon Society might be interested in sponsoring HREPs, but only in the context of pool plans and other system priorities.

Cobb said the Corps would provide a draft of the possible NGO language to the program partners for their comments.

HREP Showcase

Don Powell briefly described the Trempealeau National Wildlife Refuge, which President Franklin Roosevelt established 65 years ago as a refuge and breeding ground for migratory birds and other wildlife. Twenty-two years ago, the Service added additional acreage to the refuge, increasing it from about 700 acres to almost 6,000 acres. The refuge is located 30 miles upstream from La Crosse on the Wisconsin side of the river. It is isolated by a series of dikes and railroad embankments, but is still 90 percent aquatic habitat.

Planning for the Trempealeau Refuge HREP began in 1990, with the primary objective being to manage water levels for migratory birds by dividing the refuge into separable management pools. This is consistent with the Service's master plan for the refuge. Project planners proposed pump stations for three pools, Pool A (700 acres), Pool C2 (220 acres), and Pool E (550 acres). Pool C2 includes an inlet from the Trempealeau River. Costs per average annual habitat unit were estimated at between \$600 and \$900, well within the acceptable range, according to Powell.

Construction began in 1996 and was completed in 1999. Construction costs totaled about \$4 million. Dikes were constructed both mechanically and hydraulically. Pool A has a permanent pump station, while Pools C2 and E use portable pumps. Powell briefly summarized features of each pool. Pool A was drawn down 3 feet in the 2000 growing season, with good vegetation response. Duck and goose use increased by 4 and 2 times, respectively, following the drawdown. The pool was allowed to refill over the winter.

The project's rock groins were damaged by ice during the winter of 1999-2000. As a result, the groins have been redesigned to flatten the slope, which should permit ice to ride up on the groin. Repair work on the groins is starting this week. According to Powell, the project survived this spring's high water with little damage. The Service allowed water into the refuge through the Trempealeau River outlet to reduce head differential.

Overall, Powell said the Trempealeau project has improved migratory bird habitat by providing direct water level management on 1,500 acres and allowing the Service to maintain existing water levels on another 2,000 acres. The dikes provide approximately 13 acres of terrestrial habitat. Erosion has been controlled on Kieps Island and reduced on Black Oak Island. Powell reported that the Minnesota Society of Professional Engineers selected the project as one of the Seven Wonders of Engineering in Minnesota for 2001. A project dedication ceremony will be held after all repair work is completed.

EMP Public Involvement

Scott Whitney presented a revised public involvement (PI) plan, which includes a detailed list of specific options and recommended annual plans for FY 02-04. According to Whitney, a team of Corps personnel from the three districts developed the revised plan. The plan is designed to inform and educate, gather input and feedback, and involve the public in planning for the future of the UMRS ecosystem. He briefly reviewed the recommended plans for each year. Whitney invited partner feedback regarding the plan.

Terry Moe observed that the plan appears to focus primarily on things the Corps would implement. Whitney said all the cost estimates are for the Corps' costs, but said he envisions the other partner agencies will contribute to implementing the PI plan in many ways. In response to a question from Charlie Wooley, Whitney said the Corps will use the Report to Congress to report on PI efforts. Gary Christoff asked whether the various tasks proposed in the plan will be put out for bid. Whitney said he anticipates that the Corps will use a combination of its own staff and contracts.

Holly Stoerker recommended that the Corps track the PI-related expenses of individual projects. She said this information, along with expenditures for program-level activities, will provide a more complete picture of the EMP's investment in public involvement. Whitney agreed and said the Corps is also mindful of the need to combine project-specific and program-level activities where appropriate. Wooley endorsed this approach, noting that Keith Beseke has 11 public meetings scheduled in the next month.

Stoerker asked how the Corps intends to evaluate its PI efforts. Whitney said the Corps will employ an adaptive approach, but does not yet have a specific strategy identified. Stoerker cautioned that analyzing the content of public comments is different from evaluating the

success of involvement efforts. In response to a question from Moe, Whitney clarified that the evaluation described in the draft plan is focused on evaluating the effectiveness of the PI efforts, not of the EMP itself. Steve Cobb said the Vicksburg District has a sophisticated interactive web site that could be used as a template for the EMP's web-based involvement efforts.

Moe asked how cost effectiveness of the PI efforts will be documented and how decisions will be made regarding the appropriate level of investment in public involvement. Whitney cited the Gardner Division project as an instance in which public input resulted in direct cost savings to the program through design modification. Roger Perk acknowledged that it will be easier to document such benefits for project-specific PI than for program-level efforts.

Whitney asked EMP-CC members to provide him with comments on the revised plan by August 31. He requested that people use MVR's digital comment form if possible.

HREP Planning

Roger Perk reported that MVR received more comments than anticipated on the most recent draft HREP planning document. Perk said that, rather than redraft the manual based on the written comments, the Corps preferred to use today's EMP-CC meeting to discuss the comments. Whitney briefly summarized the comments, indicating that concerns centered primarily on:

- the focus of the document,
- the proposed Ecological Resources Team (ERT),
- pool planning,
- the Habitat Needs Assessment,
- the Regional Management Team,
- formation of Ecological Planning Teams,
- existing coordinating committees,
- political equity between the states, and
- roles and interrelationships.

Terry Moe urged that the HREP planning guidance focus on what agencies do as part of HREP sequencing. He said other material in the draft is confusing and gives the impression that the HREP process is more complicated than it actually is. Kevin Szcodronski suggested that material addressing the Corps' planning process in general should be dealt with separately, concurring with Moe that this content clutters the document.

In response to a question from Szcodronski, Perk and Steve Cobb said they anticipate tabling the proposed ERT for now. They cited other more pressing issues and the states' lack of support for the concept.

Barb Naramore clarified the states' comments regarding the pool planning process, explaining that the states acknowledge that the first iteration plans will likely need improvement.

However, the states believe that the on-going process should be allowed to unfold and be refined as needed, rather than bringing all the participants back to the beginning. In response to a question from Cobb, Naramore said the pool plans are not currently all at the same stage. The plans are furthest along in MVP and least developed in MVS. Robin Grawe reported that public meetings on the MVP pool plans have been scheduled. Cobb emphasized the need for the EMP to demonstrate holistic planning if it is to compete successfully for funds. Toward that end, he stressed that pool plans must be completed for the entire UMRS if they are to be useful in HREP planning. Moe expressed concern that the approach to pool planning may differ among the districts. Whitney suggested that using the MVP template would ensure basic consistency and help speed the process in MVR and MVS.

EMP-CC members discussed next steps for the HREP planning guidance. Several state members said they did not think it was necessary for MVR staff to prepare written responses to the partners' comments. Instead, they encouraged Perk and Whitney to focus their efforts on revising the draft guidance. The state members also suggested that Corps staff consult with UMRBA staff if they require clarification regarding the states' perspectives or would like input on potential revisions. It was agreed that MVR staff would revise the draft manual and circulate it for comment among the program partners.

Perk reported on the status of new HREP proposals that each of the district teams was asked to develop. Perk said projects are currently being selected for initiation of design work in FY 02, contingent on sufficient funds.

Other Business

Steve Cobb reported that the navigation study has been restarted in accordance with August 2 guidance from General Griffin, Director of Civil Works. The guidance calls for development of a comprehensive framework based on environmental sustainability and specifically directs the Corps to address "the advisability of modifying the ... EMP to plan and implement ecosystem restoration measures that might be identified in this study." Cobb assured the EMP-CC that MVD will keep the committee informed as it responds to this directive. Terry Moe thanked Cobb. Moe said Wisconsin would oppose any redirection that came at the expense of the current EMP, but would not necessarily oppose an augmentation of the program. Cobb said MVD will evaluate potential EMP modifications as directed by General Griffin, but emphasized that the Corps is not looking to shift the EMP to a navigation support program. Kevin Szcodronski said it is good to see Corps headquarters drawing connections between its various missions and programs on the UMRS and expressed satisfaction that General Griffin clearly recognizes the EMP as a significant program. Gary Christoff voiced concern based on his Missouri River experience, noting that the Corps was pressed to use the Missouri River Fish and Wildlife Mitigation Program to address threatened and endangered species issues, despite the fact that this is not the intent of the program.

Moe noted that the Corps' FY 02 EMP capability is much higher than either the House or the Senate amounts. He asked whether there might be value in urging conferees to support an amount above House-passed \$21 million. Several people indicated that it is highly unusual, but not unknown, for conferees to approve amounts higher than those previously passed by both chambers.

Barb Naramore announced the following dates and locations for future EMP-CC meetings: November 15, 2001 in St. Louis; February 28, 2002 in Minneapolis/St. Paul; and May 16, 2002 in the Quad Cities. The navigation study Governors' Liaison Committee and the Upper Mississippi River Basin Association are scheduled to meet on the two days prior to each of these dates. Requested topics for the November EMP-CC meeting include performance of head differential projects relative to other types of projects in the recent flooding, bio-response monitoring and project evaluation, flood damage information on MVS HREPs, and LTRMP flood monitoring findings.

**EMP-CC Attendance List
August 8, 2001**

Steve Cobb	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVD
Charlie Wooley	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 3
Linda Leake	U.S. Geological Survey, UMESC
Scott Stuewe	Illinois Department of Natural Resources
Kevin Szcodronski	Iowa Department of Natural Resources
Steve Johnson	Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
Gary Christoff	Missouri Department of Conservation
Terry Moe	Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
Larry Shepard	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 7
Dave Carvey	Natural Resources Conservation Service
Al Ames	Maritime Administration
Greg Ruff	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVD
Don Powell	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVP
Gary Loss	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVR
Teresa Kincaid	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVR
Ken Barr	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVR
Roger Perk	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVR
Scott Whitney	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVR
Deb Foley	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVS
Mike Thompson	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVS
Gary Lee	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVS
Dan Stinnett	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 3
Keith Beseke	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, UMR Refuge
Jon Duyvejonck	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service/Upper Mississippi River Conservation Committee
Joyce Collins	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Marion
Ken Lubinski	U.S. Geological Survey, UMESC
Mike Dewey	U.S. Geological Survey, UMESC
Jennifer Sauer	U.S. Geological Survey, UMESC
Dave Soballe	U.S. Geological Survey, UMESC
Randy Burkhardt	U.S. Geological Survey, UMESC
Pete Boma	U.S. Geological Survey, UMESC
Dennis Wasley	U.S. Geological Survey, UMESC
Brian Ickes	U.S. Geological Survey, UMESC
Yao Yin	U.S. Geological Survey, UMESC
Tom Kelly	U.S. Geological Survey, UMESC
Madelon Wise	U.S. Geological Survey, UMESC
Norman Senjem	Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
Gordon Farabee	Missouri Department of Conservation
Ken Brummett	Missouri Department of Conservation
Mike Wells	Missouri Department of Natural Resources
Jerry Vineyard	Missouri Department of Natural Resources

Terry Dukerschein	Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Onalaska Field Station
Robin Grawe	Minnesota-Wisconsin Boundary Area Commission
Dan McGuinness	National Audubon Society, UMR Campaign
Tom Edwards	River Rescue
Marian Havlik	Malacological Consultants
Holly Stoerker	Upper Mississippi River Basin Association
Barb Naramore	Upper Mississippi River Basin Association

FY02 EMP FUNDING

(\$000's)

House = \$21 M
Senate = \$19 M
President = \$21 M
Capacity = \$33 M

TOTAL BUDGET	21,000
S&S Assessment	10.57%
S&S Amount	2,200
ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS	
Regional Management	110
Independent Technical Advisory Comm.	150
Public Involvement	110
Report to Congress	150
SUB (TOT – ADMIN)	18,260
LTRMP 31.4%	5,734
USFWS Coordination	300
HREP	12,227
St. Paul District (35%)	4,279
Rock Island District (40%)	4,891
St. Louis District (25%)	3,057