

**Minutes of the 145th Quarterly Meeting
of the
Upper Mississippi River Basin Association**

**February 6, 2018
Moline, Illinois**

Sam Hiscocks called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. Participants were as follows:

UMRBA Representatives and Alternates:

Loren Wobig	Illinois Department of Natural Resources
Rick Pohlman	Illinois Department of Natural Resources
Dan Stephenson	Illinois Department of Natural Resources
Mike McClelland	Illinois Department of Natural Resources
Sam Hiscocks	Iowa Department of Transportation
Dave Frederickson	Minnesota Department of Agriculture
Megan Moore	Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (on behalf of Barb Naramore)
Patrick Phenow	Minnesota Department of Transportation (via phone)
Dru Buntin	Missouri Department of Natural Resources
Bryan Hopkins	Missouri Department of Natural Resources
Steve Galarneau	Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
Jim Fischer	Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
John Petty	Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection

Federal UMRBA Liaisons:

MG Richard Kaiser	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVD
Shannon Allen	U.S. Department of Agriculture, NRCS
Branden Criman	U.S. Department of Transportation, MARAD
Ken Westlake	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (via phone)
Sabrina Chandler	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (via phone)
Scott Morlock	U.S. Geological Survey

Others in Attendance:

Randy Schultz	Iowa Department of Natural Resources
Chris Klenklen	Missouri Department of Agriculture
Jordan Weeks	Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
Jessica Brooks	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, NWS
Brian Chewing	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVD
Donald Balch	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVD
Jim Bodron	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVD
Gabe Harris	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVD
Mike Cox	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVD
Thatch Shepard	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVD
Terry Birkenstock	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVP
Shahin Khazrajafari	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVP
Tom Novak	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVP
Col. Craig Baumgartner	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVR
Dennis Hamilton	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVR

Andy Barnes	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVR
Andy Hall	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVR
Marv Hubbell	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVR
Karen Hagerty	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVR
Julie Millhollin	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVR
Roger Perk	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVR
Marshall Plumley	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVR
Scott Whitney	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVR
Matt Zehr	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVR
Jasen Brown	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVS
Brian Markert	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVS
Kip Runyon	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVS
Jodi Creswell	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Regional Planning Division North
Brian Johnson	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Regional Planning Division North
Kat McCain	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Regional Planning Division North
Tim Yager	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Mark Gaikowski	U.S. Geological Survey, UMESC
Amy Beussink	U.S. Geological Survey, Illinois, Iowa, Missouri Water Science Center
Tom Boland	Amec Foster Wheeler
Marty Hettel	American Commercial Barge Lines/Inland Waterways Users Board
Olivia Dorothy	American Rivers
Roger Less	HDR
Alicia Lloyd	Missouri Coalition for the Environment
Brad Walker	Missouri Coalition for the Environment
Nancy Guyton	Neighbors of the Mississippi
Bertha Mae Taylor	Neighbors of the Mississippi
Gretchen Benjamin	The Nature Conservancy
Kirsten Mickelsen	Upper Mississippi River Basin Association
Mark Ellis	Upper Mississippi River Basin Association

Minutes

Dave Fredrickson moved and Steve Galarneau seconded a motion to approve the draft minutes of the November 7, 2017 UMRBA quarterly meeting as written. The motion was approved unanimously.

Executive Director's Report

Kirsten Mickelsen expanded on her written Executive Director's report as follows:

- In October 2016, MARAD awarded a \$96,000 grant to UMRBA, St. Louis Port Authority, Inland Rivers Ports and Terminals, and Mississippi River Cities and Towns Initiative to convene shippers, operators, ocean carriers, and ports and terminals in an effort to accelerate development of container-on-barge (COB) shipping on the UMRS. The parties anticipate finalizing agreement terms within the next month. St. Louis Port Authority is the primary grantee. In response to a question from Mickelsen, Dru Buntin moved and Loren Wobig seconded a motion to approve her execution of a sub-contract with the St. Louis Port Authority for UMRBA to participate as a partner in the grant.
- On February 1, 2018, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and UMRBA finalized a one-year support services base agreement for calendar year 2018. The contract includes four additional option years.
- UMRBA hosted a January 30, 2018 water level management workshop in Dubuque. The meeting focused on partners' vision for restoring water level variation and goals for a more coordinated,

system-wide team. The Corps recently announced that it approved Corps assistance of up to \$120,000 annually per UMRBA's PAS request. The timing of funding allocation is unknown.

- The UMRBA Board has agreed to submit a PAS proposal to the Corps for advancing long term channel maintenance and flood management planning. The Board will meet in early April 2018 to discuss the terms and scope.
- The National Park Service has requested an extension of its cooperative agreement with UMRBA to develop a spill response plan for the St. Croix Riverway. UMRBA finalized the planned work on December 31, 2017 under budget. Work under this extension will utilize the remaining funds to assist with outreach and tribal consultation. Mickelsen and NPS grant staff are working to finalize the contract extension.

Mickelsen pointed to the Association's financial report on pages page B-6 to B-9 of the agenda packet, including UMRBA Treasurer Jason Tidemann's review of the financial statement from October 2017 to December 2017. Dave Frederickson moved and Dan Stephenson seconded a motion to approve the Treasurer's statement. The Board unanimously approved the motion by voice vote.

Interbasin Diversion Charter Annual Consultation

Kirsten Mickelsen explained that the five states are party to the 1989 Upper Mississippi River Basin Charter, which sets forth a notification and consultation process for any new or increased water diversion out of the basin that will exceed an average of 5 million gallons per day during any 30-day period. The Charter requires the signatory states to report on their involvement in qualifying diversion requests at UMRBA's annual meeting. The states reported as follows:

Iowa — Sam Hiscocks reported no diversion requests in Iowa.

Minnesota — Dave Frederickson reported no diversion requests in Minnesota.

Wisconsin — Steve Galarneau reported no diversion requests in Wisconsin.

Missouri — Dru Buntin reported no diversion requests in Missouri. Buntin expressed concerns with potential out-of-basin diversions from the Missouri River basin.

Illinois — Rick Pohlman reported that the Godley Public Water District has submitted an application for a river withdrawal permit that would result in a diversion of water out of the Upper Mississippi River Basin.

Mickelsen noted that UMRBA staff will send letters to the Governors reporting on the results of the annual consultation required under the 1989 Charter. Jim Fischer noted that this would be the first time the Diversion Charter is triggered and requested that the Charter's specific approach to interstate consultation is followed. Pohlman committed to following the Charter process, including providing the states with specific details of the requested withdrawal permit.

[Note: Subsequent to the meeting and upon further investigation, Illinois found that the withdrawal would not constitute such a diversion and that the water use would remain within the basin. Therefore, Illinois is reporting no proposed out-of-basin diversions this year.]

State UMR-Related Updates

Wisconsin – Jim Fischer reported that Wisconsin DNR continues to implement its realignment strategy as approved two years ago. The agency is working to enhance consistency in ecosystem restoration and

monitoring state-wide as well as increasing its federal advocacy strategies. Wisconsin DNR is also actively engaged in UMRB and is having internal discussions about how it can better work with partners.

Iowa – Sam Hiscocks reported, on behalf of Iowa DNR, that it has completed a river restoration toolbox. Iowa DNR staff would like to present the toolbox to the Board at its May 15, 2018 quarterly meeting. Hiscocks said Iowa DOT is consulting with a contractor regarding potential alternative financing approaches to fund navigation infrastructure investment on the Upper Mississippi and is developing plans for stakeholder engagement. Hiscocks will provide the Board with more detailed information as the plans unfold.

Minnesota – Dave Frederickson reported that about 99 percent of buffers surrounding public waters are implemented. Required buffers around judicial and county ditches are expected to be completed in November 2018. So far, 550 farms involving 300,000 acres are enrolled in Minnesota's agriculture water certainty program. Frederickson said Minnesota Department of Agriculture is employing well testing as a part of its Nutrient Fertilizer Management Program.

Megan Moore reported that Minnesota DNR is exploring potential options to place dredged material in Pool 4. Minnesota DNR is also involved in UMRBA's water level management discussions and as an implementing partner of UMRB.

Illinois – Loren Wobig said this year is the 25th anniversary of the 1993 flood. Illinois DNR is partnering with the Illinois Association for Floodplain and Stormwater Management (IAFSM) in creating a video commemorating the flood. Wobig anticipates that the video will be published for public viewing in April 2018. Illinois DNR is in the process of updating rules related to floodplain management. Wobig explained that Illinois DOT is interested in re-engaging on Upper Mississippi and Illinois River issues and is working with Illinois DNR regarding authorities to do so.

Dan Stephenson reported that Illinois DNR is working with the Corps on the Brandon Road project. Illinois is contracting with commercial anglers and biologists to remove Asian carp from the Illinois River. About one million pounds were removed in 2017 that pushed back the leading edge. The fish are also being removed down river to alleviate pressure on the electric barriers. According to Stephenson, market pressure to support eradication would be helpful.

Missouri – Dru Buntin reported that Missouri DNR hosted a series of stakeholder meetings to discuss the forthcoming UMRS flood and channel maintenance management study. Buntin emphasized the importance of ensuring that the planning effort remains highly transparent and equitable. Missouri DNR will also be making a stronger push for water resource infrastructure investment broadly and, more specifically, for inland waterways. Missouri will be undergoing a significant effort to update its statewide water plan that looks forward to 2060. The planning effort will occur over a few years.

Buntin said Missouri DNR is partnering with the Corps on a feasibility study for the Grand River watershed. The study will explore sediment and drainage improvements to challenges resulting from channelized streams and ditches. Missouri DNR is also pursuing a legislative fix to extend the geographic scope of the St. Louis Riverfront Project to allow the Meramec feasibility study to include the entire basin.

Buntin said he plans to attend the Interstate Council on Water Policy's March 14-15, 2018 meeting in Washington, D.C. This meeting will be held jointly with the Western States Water Council.

Missouri DNR is also monitoring drought conditions and is evaluating whether to issue a declaration of ongoing drought.

MVD Division Briefing

MG Richard Kaiser discussed the importance of the Mississippi River to the country's prosperity and thanked UMRBA for its leadership in working towards a positive impact and in building bridges among states, federal agencies, local governments, and interested stakeholders. MG Kaiser acknowledged that management issues of differing mission areas co-exist and that solutions to management (e.g., habitat restoration, flood management, lock and channel investment) can flourish under an integrated approach. MG Kaiser said container shipping is a meaningful opportunity to alleviate congestion on land-based modes – i.e., roads and rail. Graphics developed by Iowa DOT illustrate the importance of the inland waterways system for moving bulk commodities in a relatively efficient and cost-effective way.

MG Kaiser said there are plans to advance infrastructure needs on the Upper Mississippi, including through UMRB, NESP, and a Section 729 study to improve flood and channel maintenance management. He encouraged UMRBA to continue serving as a voice for the region and noted the importance of having all five Governors speak jointly about their shared interests.

Loren Wobig expressed his encouragement by the Corps' efforts to increase efficiency in project planning and implementation. Dru Buntin mentioned that UMRBA has been communicating the challenges to states in executing the Corps' non-federal cost-share agreements. This issue has the potential to be a major impediment to partnering with the Corps. Steve Galarneau emphasized the need to think creatively and alleviate policy constraints to allow for beneficial use projects in dredged material management. MG Kaiser said the transactional cost of managing dredged material is used as the defining least cost. He reflected that the Corps' strict interpretation of cost and benefit caused substantial confusion in the Pool 4 DMMP scenario and suggested that policies be explored that also allow for considering social and environmental costs and benefits. He said the Corps would appreciate input on how to quantify environmental benefits in financial terms. Galarneau suggested working with other aquatic systems (e.g., Great Lakes) that struggle with dredging policies to share information on best management practices and to determine the best policy decisions. Col. Craig Baumgartner explained that there is an opportunity now to work with the Administration to resolve challenges to project execution, and he encouraged UMRBA to shape discussions and propose solutions.

Buntin referred to the beneficial use pilot program authorized in the 2016 WIIN Act, encouraging the Corps to implement a beneficial use project(s) in the Upper Mississippi. Brian Chewing reported that the Corps anticipates publishing a formal solicitation on the Federal Register for beneficial use project proposals shortly. [Note: Subsequent to the meeting, the Corps issued the solicitation on February 9, 2018 and asked for submissions by March 12, 2018.]

Dave Frederickson recognized that tributary influences will continue to pressure the 9-foot navigation channel and observed that investment in the watershed to slow water and sediment runoff will pay tremendous dividends. Buntin echoed Frederickson's comments and noted the direct relevance to UMRBA's proposed UMRS flood and channel maintenance management planning effort.

America's Watershed Initiative

Jordy Jordahl explained that the impetus for a collaborative partnership through the America's Watershed Initiative (AWI) resulted from the recognition that all major watersheds within the United States face a shared challenge of inadequate and isolated stakeholder engagement, lack of a shared vision, and poor governance. Following a series of summits and stakeholder meetings, the following key goals for the Mississippi River watershed were identified:

- Maintain supply of abundant clean water
- Provide reliable flood control and risk reduction

- Support local, state, and national economies
- Provide world-class recreation opportunities
- Support and enhance healthy and productive ecosystems
- Serve as the nation's most valuable river transportation corridor

Jordahl discussed the AWI's successes since its origins, including a series of summits and other workshops from 2010 to 2015 that culminated in the 2015 Mississippi River Watershed Report Card. The report card was a first attempt to provide consistent measurement and assessment of the entire Mississippi River Watershed across economic, social, and environmental goals. Jordahl reflected that the process of engaging stakeholders and bringing together diverse interests was as important as the report card product.

AWI's Steering Committee has been deliberating the Initiative's next steps and organized into three strategic areas. These include convening stakeholders, updating the report card, and considering AWI's organizations options. More specifically, the Committee is considering hosting a watershed summit in the latter half of 2018 and a Mississippi Watershed Spotlight event in Washington, D.C. in 2019. Jordahl explained that TNC has provided organization support for AWI since its initial inception. For various reasons, the Board is now considering standing up AWI as its own 501(c)(3) and formalizing the roles of its Steering Committee and any sub-committees or working groups.

Jordahl emphasized the value of AWI for facilitating long-standing collaborative efforts that will result in a more sustainable watershed across all goals. Mickelsen expressed appreciation to Jordahl for his leadership and ability to convene the various stakeholder groups. She also gave thanks to TNC for housing AWI. Dru Buntin serves on the AWI Steering Committee and said AWI's future is somewhat unclear. At its October 2017 and January 2018 in-person meetings, the Steering Committee discussed the potential to host two major events annually. They would include a stakeholder summit in the fall and annual advocacy meeting in Washington D.C. in the spring. Bryan Hopkins said he views AWI as a venue to promote overall water resource needs similar to the Great Lakes collaborations. Jordahl said engaging stakeholders early and often in the report card development was fundamental to its ultimate success and ownership throughout the region.

Spring Flood Forecast

Jessica Brooks summarized the NWS's forecasts for potential flood risk on the Upper Mississippi River in spring 2018. Current conditions suggest that significant rainfall will be the primary factor of a spring flood event unless a major snow event occurs. Brooks said that snowpack is less than normal, soil moisture is near to below normal, and streamflows are normal or below normal for mid-February across much of the Upper Mississippi River Basin. Cold temperatures combined with minimal snowpack (to provide insulation) has resulted in deeper than normal frost conditions.

Brooks said the NWS's spring forecasts will be published on February 15, 2018 and March 1, 2018 on its website: www.weather.gov/ncrfc/. Brooks welcomed any comments or questions to any of the NWS Upper Mississippi field offices.

USGS Nutrient Pollution Science Roadmap

Scott Morlock announced that USGS recently published an ArcGIS-based Nutrient Pollution Story Map of the Mississippi River Basin, including an interactive map of the Mississippi River and a video. The story map explains scientific information in a comprehensive and meaningful way for the interested public. It was created in response to MRCTI's request for a central place to access nutrient-related data.

Morlock explained that the story map explains nutrient pollution and its sources and impacts, efforts to reduce nutrient loss, and USGS's science and technology used in monitoring, assessment, and research.

In response to a question from Jim Fischer, Amy Beussink explained that installation of a super gage can range from \$30,000 to \$50,000 depending on its capabilities. It is most cost-effective to install a super gage at existing stream gage sites. The super gages can be continuously operated to develop scientific inferences and predictions of future conditions. Morlock said partners can contact him if they are interested in partnering on a super gage installation. Dru Buntin noted that Missouri DNR was able to secure funding after the state legislature proposed to eliminate funding for stream gages. Buntin emphasized the need to reduce annual operating costs in order for states to maintain continuous funding. Beussink said she anticipates that costs of sensors will decrease over time following increases in industry competition and technology improvements. Morlock mentioned that USGS is seeking efficiencies by optimizing resources (e.g., prioritizing placement of sensors) and leveraging resources.

Federal Agency Fiscal Updates

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Brian Chewing explained that the Army Corps of Engineers is currently operating under a continuing resolution authority (CRA) for FY 2018 that Congress passed on December 22, 2017. It is set to expire on February 9, 2018. It is not yet known how Congress will act. [Note: Subsequent to the meeting, Congress enacted a third CRA on February 9, 2018 and then a full-year appropriations measure on March 23, 2018.] Chewing anticipates that the President's FY 2019 budget will be released in early to mid February and that it will have similar funding levels for the Corps as recent years. MVD is developing its FY 2020 budget for programs and projects within the Division to submit to Headquarters in early summer.

Chewing observed that funding for the Corps' investigations account is trending downward, the operations and maintenance account is fairly flat, and the MR&T account is proposed to decrease slightly in FY 2018. UMRR is included in the President's FY 2018 budget as well as the Senate and House energy and water appropriations measures to receive its full authorized annual funding of \$33.17 million. Chewing explained that the Corps is applying the "least of" rule when planning for FY 2018 spending – i.e., basing budgets on the lowest funding level provided in either the President's FY 2018 budget or House or Senate appropriations measures.

Dennis Hamilton said major rehabilitation of the La Grange Lock and Dam is a high priority for the Rock Island District but will ultimately depend on funding. Marty Hettel said the Inland Waterways Users Board is working hard to secure funding for the La Grange major rehabilitation and is recommending a change to the existing cost-share requirement in order to advance construction more efficiently. Hettel said the Board is also working with the Corps to plan for major maintenance at Illinois River sites while the river is closed to traffic during the La Grange major rehabilitation construction. In response to a question from Loren Wobig, Hettel explained that the Inland Waterways Users Board is also recommending PED be advanced on NESP so that it is ready for construction in three years when Olmsted construction is complete.

In response to a question from Hettel, Hamilton said the FY 2018 work plan will not be available when the FY 2019 President's budget is released unless a full-year FY 2018 appropriations measure is enacted.

Brad Walker raised the issue that the Administration's current position is that NESP will require further economic evaluation before implementation. Other meeting participants expressed disagreement about that conclusion.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Ken Westlake reported that the USEPA is operating under a continuing resolution authority through February 8, 2018. Guidance for USEPA is to spend at 35 percent of the FY 2017 enacted budget. The ultimate budget numbers remain unknown. The agency is awarding partial grant awards for the base program until a full-year budget is enacted. Westlake explained that USEPA's "purchasing power" is decreasing over time as inflation and salaries increase. Westlake reported that USEPA has not yet set state-specific levels for the CWA or Safe Drinking Water Act state revolving funds for FY 2018.

Westlake reported that Cathy Stepp was recently appointed as USEPA Region 5 Secretary. USEPA is also working to streamline environmental review and permitting in response to the August 15, 2017 Presidential Executive Order 13807 *Establishing Discipline and Accountability in the Environmental Review and Permitting Process for Infrastructure Projects*. Chewning said the Executive Order also applies to the Corps and USFWS. Westlake said he anticipates this will be a major area for innovation in the coming year.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Tim Yager said USFWS is in the same FY 2018 budget situation as the other federal agencies. USFWS is executing at FY 2017 funding levels. A major priority for the Service is to improve public access to Refuge land, including areas that require crossing railroad tracks.

U.S. Geological Survey

Scott Morlock said USGS is operating as usual under the existing continuing resolution authority for FY 2018, but is not allowing for new starts. Morlock announced several mergers of USGS's water science centers. The Missouri, Illinois, and Iowa are merging into a Central-Midwest Science Center, which will be lead by Amy Beussink. The Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Michigan centers will merge into the Upper Midwest Water Science Center and will be lead by John Walker. The Upper Midwest Environmental Science Center (UMESC) will continue to operate under Mark Gaikowski's leadership.

MARAD

Branden Criman reported that USDOT is finalizing its review of TIGER grant applications. MARAD is serving on the review board. MARAD received \$4.8 million in FY 2017 for the America's Marine Highway Program to help trigger the expansion of existing, or development of new, shipping services on designated routes. The Upper Mississippi and Illinois Rivers are designed as Marine Highways 35 and 55. Criman explained that MARAD has developed more robust criteria for evaluating the applications and is currently accepting grant proposals for the \$4.8 million in funding available.

Criman said the USDOT offers a number of other funding opportunities, including through the National Highway Freight Program. She mentioned that Iowa is one of the first states to utilize the funding as discretionary.

U.S. Department of Agriculture

Shannon Allen said Congress created the new Agricultural Conservation Easement Program in the 2014 Farm Bill that merged the Wetlands Reserve Program, Grasslands Reserve Program, and Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program. NRCS recently initiated a first round of applications through the new program. Allen observed that NRCS's FY 2018 budget is likely to be stable relative to recent years. NRCS continues to work with farmers throughout the watershed to implement conservation practices but has reduced its work due to the existing CRA.

Commercial Navigation

Iowa DOT Stakeholder Engagement

Sam Hiscocks recalled that the Upper Mississippi River states' departments of transportation have increased their collective interest and engagement in managing the Upper Mississippi River as part of national and state transportation networks. Iowa has been directly involved in the Trump Administration's infrastructure investment initiative, serving as a key driver for seeking investment in the inland waterways. Financing has been a primary discussion topic. In late 2017, Iowa DOT contracted with HDR to employ a stakeholder survey regarding Upper Mississippi River navigation-related infrastructure investment and financing needs. The survey received mostly qualitative information with some quantitative data regarding barge movement. Key takeaways were that:

- Inland navigation is crucial to economic competition
- Proximity and accessibility to the river is important
- Reduced reliability perception is a challenge
- Shipping costs are rising
- Shifting transportation of bulk commodities to a different mode would be difficult

Survey respondents recommended that the Corps' funding and project delivery approaches be evaluated, investment be placed first on maintenance and then improvement, private-public partnerships be explored, container-on-barge be developed, and "payers" have a greater say in investment expenditures. Some respondents raised questions regarding other users paying into the infrastructure investment, such as recreational users and energy production facilities. Anticipated trends are that manufacturing and agricultural use of the river will increase over time. As a next step, Iowa is planning for a Governor-level summit to facilitate regional conversations. In response to a question from John Petty, Hiscocks said the reliability factors are related to unscheduled lock and channel closures. Dru Buntin indicated that Missouri is interested in engaging in interstate discussions.

Economic Implications of Unscheduled Lock Outages at L&D 25 and La Grange

Mark Burton, with the University of Tennessee, explained that the National Waterways Council and MARAD contracted with the University to evaluate the economic impacts associated with unscheduled lock closures. The purpose was to better understand the implications as unplanned, failure-related closures are occurring more frequently. Two of the four locks analyzed in the study are located on the Upper Mississippi River System: La Grange and L&D 25. The analysis found that a substantial closure at La Grange would require over 29 million tons of cargo to divert to rail or road, costing \$1.7 billion. At L&D 25, a substantial closure would divert over 22 million tons of cargo at a cost of \$1.57 billion.

Major findings are that rail capacity in the Louisiana Gulf Corridor is insufficient to handle the additional cargo and expanding capacity (e.g., equipment, crews) would take more than a year and would still not be sufficient. Further, terminal constraints may not be fixable, particularly in the Gulf area. Therefore, international trade of agriculture-related products would need to be transported via the Pacific-Northwest at a significantly higher cost to farmers. Burton illustrated that an extended unplanned closure of La Grange or L&D 25 would directly and indirectly impact 18 states, but particularly the states of Louisiana, Texas, and Illinois.

John Petty suggested that an impact assessment be done of actual closures to Gulf of Mexico shipping to illustrate the economic consequences, using Hurricane Katrina as an example. Burton agreed and said such an assessment would be an effective way to validate results. In response to questions about utilizing the Pacific-Northwest, Burton discussed the potential for competition of rail cars with

petroleum and containerized products. Brian Chewning recalled that the 2012 drought event that affected shipping on the Mississippi River provided a demonstrated example of the regional economic impacts stemming from a closure.

In response to a question from Brad Walker regarding the cause of an extended lock closure, Burton said he could only speculate on that but clarified that the study wanted to examine a closure of sufficient duration that would cause users to seek an alternative shipping mode.

WRDA 2018/Federal Infrastructure Investment Advocacy

Mississippi River Cities and Towns Initiative

Colin Wellenkamp said MRCTI will be hosting its annual Capitol Hill meeting on March 6-8, 2018 that will include meetings with the Administration, federal agencies, Congressional members, and leading experts in the insurance and local financing sectors. Wellenkamp said MRCTI will publish its 2018 policy platform soon but added that it will likely be very similar to its 2017 platform. The mayors will continue their discussion with Administration officials working on infrastructure investment. The mayors are supportive of the Administration's efforts to improve Mississippi River infrastructure but have questions regarding financing.

Wellenkamp announced that MRCTI's 2018 annual meeting is scheduled for September 18-20 in the Quad Cities.

Inland Rivers Ports and Terminals

Aimee Andres said IRPT held a legislative briefing in Washington, D.C. in fall 2017 and plans to host similar events on a biennial basis. IRPT legislative priorities include 1) expanding Corps' criteria for harbor dredging beyond tonnage as directed by Congress in WRRDA 2014 – e.g., economic value, industry dependence – and 2) allowing navigation projects to be funded in a reliable, efficient way rather than being frequently disrupted by the annual appropriations process. IRPT is also concerned with OMB's 2.5 benefit-to-cost with a seven percent discount threshold to funding navigation projects. Andres said IRPT is scheduled to host its annual meeting on April 24-26, 2018 in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Waterways Council

Paul Rohde said WCI was instrumental in facilitating a December 22, 2017 letter signed by ten Senators and a November 29, 2017 letter signed by 40 Representatives to OMB Director Mick Mulvaney. The letters sought NESP funding in the Corps' FY 2018 work plan and President's FY 2019 budget. WCI remains cautiously optimistic about the potential \$200 billion infrastructure investment plan. Rohde applauded USDA's vocal support for lock infrastructure investment. WCI has participated in various White House discussions about waterways infrastructure investment and financing as well as rural infrastructure discussions. Questions remain about how the Administration will seek to leverage state and local resources. WCI will host its annual Washington visits on February 13-15, 2018, organizing over 100 meetings with Congressional members and staff. Rohde expressed appreciation for continued partnerships with UMRBA, TNC, Ducks Unlimited, and Audubon in support of NESP.

WCI will seek to highlight NESP in the potential WRDA 2018 measure and will oppose any lock fee or tolling provision. WCI is seeking to change industry's cost share of navigation construction and major rehabilitation projects from 50 percent to 25 percent. The intent is to allow for more efficient federal investment in planning and design of navigation projects currently delayed while the Corps finalizes construction on Olmsted locks. Rohde mentioned that 74 tow boats with 900 barges were stalled during the unplanned closure of Ohio River Locks 52 and 53 in 2017.

Administrative Issues

FY 2018 UMRBA Budget

Kirsten Mickelsen proposed changes to UMRBA's FY 2018 budget to reflect staff changes and incorporate slight modifications to income and expenditure assumptions. The FY 2018 budget now assumes a surplus of \$54,542. At its breakfast meeting, the Board directed staff to use the surplus on a new website for the Association and for communications and outreach of the UMRS economic profile results and supplemental information. Steve Galarneau moved and Dave Frederickson seconded a motion to amend UMRBA's FY 2018 budget as provided by Mickelsen.

Election of Officers

Mickelsen and UMRBA Board members thanked Tim Hall for his service as Board Chair over the past year, especially throughout the UMRBA Executive Direction transition.

Loren Wobig moved and Dru Buntin seconded a motion to nominate Dave Frederickson as UMRBA Chair. Loren Wobig moved and Steve Galarneau second a motion to nominate Rick Pohlman to serve as UMRBA Vice Chair. Dru Buntin moved and Steve Galarneau seconded a motion to nominate Jason Tidemann to UMRBA Treasurer. All three motions carried unanimously by voice vote.

Future Meeting Schedule

May 2018 — St. Louis

- UMRBA quarterly meeting — May 15
- UMRR Coordinating Committee quarterly meeting — May 16

August 2018 — La Crosse

- UMRBA quarterly meeting — August 14
- UMRR Coordinating Committee quarterly meeting — August 15

October 2018 — Bloomington (MN)

- UMRBA quarterly meeting — October 30
- UMRR Coordinating Committee quarterly meeting — October 31

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:34 p.m.