

**Minutes of the 162nd Quarterly Meeting  
of the  
Upper Mississippi River Basin Association**

**May 24, 2022  
Web-Based Conference Meeting**

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

UMRBA Representatives and Alternates:

Rick Pohlman	Illinois Department of Natural Resources
Chad Craycraft	Illinois Department of Natural Resources
Dave Glover	Illinois Department of Natural Resources
Loren Wobig	Illinois Department of Natural Resources
Tim Hall	Iowa Department of Natural Resources
Jake Hansen	Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship
Sam Hiscocks	Iowa Department of Transportation
Barb Naramore	Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
Dru Buntin	Missouri Department of Natural Resources
Jennifer Hoggatt	Missouri Department of Natural Resource
Matt Vitello	Missouri Department of Conservation
Steve Galarneau	Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
Jim Fischer	Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

Federal UMRBA Liaisons:

Brian Chewning	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVD
Joe Summerlin	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 7 (on behalf of Ken Westlake)
Sabrina Chandler	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, UMR Refuges
Mark Gaikowski	U.S. Geological Survey, UMESC

Others in Attendance:

Terra McParland	Illinois Department of Natural Resources
Kirk Hansen	Iowa Department of Natural Resources
Megan Moore	Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
Erin Fanning	Missouri Department of Natural Resources
Bryan Hopkins	Missouri Department of Natural Resources
David Frantz	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, HQ
Renee Turner	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVD
James Lewis	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVD
Jim Cole	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVD
Leanne Riggs	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
Angela Deen	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVP
Zachary Kimmel	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVP
Col. Jesse Curry	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVR

Kim Thomas	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVR
Andrew Goodall	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVR
Karen Hagerty	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVR
Rachel Hawes	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVR
Marshall Plumley	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVR
Casey Lewis	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVR
Davi Michl	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVR
Rachel Perrine	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVR
Bre Popkin	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVR
Chuck Theiling	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVR
COL Kevin Golinghorst	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVS
Lt. Col. Jason Sears	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVS
John Peukert	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVS
Michael Feldmann	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVS
Abby Hoyt	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVS
Brian Markert	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVS
Shawn Sullivan	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVS
Greg Kohler	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVS
Brian Johnson	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Regional Planning Division North
Steve Schaff	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 7
Kraig McPeek	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Illinois-Iowa Ecological Services
Lauren Larson	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Illinois-Iowa Field Office
Sara Schmuecker	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Illinois-Iowa Field Office
Laura Muzal	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Illinois-Iowa Field Office
Matt Mangan	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Illinois Ecological Services
Kelly Warner	U.S. Geological Survey, Central Midwest Water Science Center
Kristen Bouska	U.S. Geological Survey, UMESC
Jennie Sauer	U.S. Geological Survey, UMESC
Mark Fuchs	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, St. Louis
Albert Ettinger	[No Affiliation]
Kim Lutz	America's Watershed Initiative
Rob Schultz	Audubon
Lindsay Brice	Audubon
Tera Hohmon	Audubon
Nat Miller	Audubon
Heidi Lane	HNTB
Doug Daigle	Lower Mississippi River Sub-Basin Committee (Hypoxia Task Force)
Brian Stenquist	Meeting Challenges
Maisah Kahn	Mississippi River Network
Rick Stoff	<i>Our Mississippi</i>
Christine Favilla	Sierra Club
Bruce Brinkman	Upper Mississippi, Illinois, and Missouri Rivers Association
Kirsten Wallace	Upper Mississippi River Basin Association
Mark Ellis	Upper Mississippi River Basin Association
Natalie Lenzen	Upper Mississippi River Basin Association
Lauren Salvato	Upper Mississippi River Basin Association
Andrew Stephenson	Upper Mississippi River Basin Association

## Minutes

Rick Pohlman moved and Steve Galarneau seconded a motion to approve the draft minutes of the February 22, 2022 UMRBA quarterly meeting as written. The motion was approved unanimously.

### Executive Director's Report

Kirsten Wallace pointed to the Executive Director's report in the agenda packet for a summary of the Association's other work efforts since the February 2022 quarterly meeting. Wallace provided a few highlights as follows:

*Staffing announcements* – Natalie Lenzen joined UMRBA staff as Operations Manager effective April 11, 2022. Lenzen's previous experience includes serving as an accountant, project manager, executive assistant, and personal banker. Natalie holds a Bachelors in Business Administration from Bemidji State University emphasizing on management.

UMRBA has hired Erin Spry to fill a new two-year position of UMRBA Project Specialist. Spry will start May 31, 2022. In this role, Spry will assist in implementing UMRBA project-specific priorities such as research, communications, and developing opportunities and means for interagency collaboration and coordination. Spry's area of work will primarily focus on water quality and quantity as well as ecosystem health. Spry's previous experience includes serving as a hydrologist for Minnesota Departments of Natural Resources and Agriculture and as a wildlife technician for the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. Spry holds a Bachelors in Geology from University of Minnesota.

Wallace explained the update needed to the UMRBA Personnel Manual to include the Project Specialist position. Barb Naramore moved and Jennifer Hoggatt seconded a motion to amend UMRBA's Personnel Manual in accordance with the annotated version provided to the Board on February 18, 2022 by Kirsten Wallace.

*Navigation and Ecosystem Sustainability Program* – Wallace underscored the value of an April 26-28, 2022 meeting among NESP's implementing agency partners. Partners had robust conversations around partnering expectations and organized a set of next steps. Partners discussed the magnitude of the investment opportunities over a 15-year planning horizon, broad implementation challenges, and new ways of doing business that will be require to meet the opportunities. Wallace thanked Brian Stenquist of *Meeting Challenges* for providing facilitation support.

*Administration-Related Business* – Wallace pointed to UMRBA's March 2022 to April 2022 financial statements provided on pages B-5 to B-8 of the agenda packet. Jennifer Hoggatt moved and Barb Naramore seconded a motion to approve the Association's budget report and balance sheet as included in the agenda packet. The motion was approved unanimously.

### UMRS Ecosystem and Navigation Management

#### *Upper Mississippi River Restoration*

Marshall Plumley provided a report on the Upper Mississippi River Restoration (UMRR) program. Plumley summarized the content and layout of the 2022 UMRR Report to Congress. The anticipated schedule includes the first reviews by MVD and HQ in June to July 2022 with their second review

occurring in fall 2022. The Corps is currently on schedule to submit the final report to HQ and ASA(CW) in late November 2022.

Plumley reported that the 2022 UMRR Ecological Status and Trends Report is scheduled to be published in late June 2022. The report summarizes analyses of 25 years of long term monitoring data on the UMRS. Plumley emphasized that the long timeframe of monitoring now allows an incomparable ability to detect long term trends, understand variation over time, and observe complex river patterns.

Plumley explained that UMRR is currently undertaking an implementation planning effort focused on its long term resource monitoring. The purpose is to work within the current 2015-2025 UMRR Strategic Plan to identify a) specific information and research needs not currently being met and b) actions that need to be taken to met those information needs. The benefit of this planning is having a set of needs prepared if and when additional funding may be allocated to LTRM.

Plumley noted that Section 317 the Senate EPW Committee's 2022 Water Resources Development Act measure calls for increasing the annual appropriation authorization for UMRR habitat rehabilitation and enhancement projects from \$40 million to \$75 million. It does not include an appropriation authority increase for LTRM.

Plumley discussed a 10-year schedule for implementing UMRR's habitat projects, illustrating on a graphic the various projects moving through planning, feasibility, construction, and monitoring. Plumley reported that UMRR completed seven habitat projects since 2016 (last report to Congress) benefitting 15,400 acres of nationally-significant habitat. An additional seven projects actively being constructed are estimated to benefit 24,140 acres of habitat and 12 projects currently in the feasibility stage are estimated to benefit 60,675 acres of habitat.

Plumley reported that, as part of the 2022 UMRR Report to Congress development, the UMRR Coordinating Committee is evaluating a set of eight implementation issues. Andrew Stephenson provided a summary of the issues with their respective options for addressing them, as follows:

- *Project partnership agreements (PPAs)* – Key impediments to non-federal cost share sponsors of UMRR habitat projects include the terms requiring the sponsor to assume complete liability for constructed projects (except for when fault or negligence is proven) and operations, maintenance, repair, replacement, and rehabilitation (OMRR&R) in perpetuity.
- *Non-traditional sponsors* – Engaging non-traditional cost-share sponsors could substantially increase UMRR's restoration opportunities.
- *External communications* – Engaging and collaborating with organizations and individuals (not directly involved with UMRR but that affect UMRR's vision and mission) should be of equal priority to UMRR's restoration and monitoring activities.
- *Federal easement lands* – Some lands suitable for land acquisition encumbered by NRCS easements (e.g., Wetland Reserve Program) were precluded per a rule change. However, a recent policy change may have modified the subject requirement.
- *Watershed input and climate change* – Changing hydrologic conditions affect the distribution and composition of species and habitat throughout the UMRS.
- *Floodplain regulations* – Floodplain regulations affect UMRR habitat projects in multiple ways by requiring them to avoid rises above a state or federal requirement.

- *Water Level Management* – A variety of policy and other issues have precluded implementation of pool-scale water level management, including the Corps’ 50-year period of analysis for evaluating project costs and benefits.

Stephenson said the UMRR Coordinating Committee will also develop an issue paper related to land acquisition.

Sabrina Chandler reported that USFWS and NRCS are planning to test the new rule pertaining to federal easements on a project outside of the UMRS. While the outcome may shed light on the potential for HREPs, Chandler acknowledged that the Corps legal counsel may hold a different interpretation and HREPs may pose unique implications.

Mark Gaikowski suggested considering an implementation issue assessment regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion when considering efforts to engage and support potential non-profit entities as cost-share sponsors of habitat projects. In response to the Board’s agreement, Kirsten Wallace suggested bringing the issue to the UMRR Coordinating Committee during its May 25, 2022 quarterly meeting.

#### *Navigation and Ecosystem Sustainability Program*

Andrew Goodall reported on the status of the L&D 25 lock modernization and L&D 22 fish passage projects, both funded through Infrastructure and Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). A project delivery team is established for the L&D 25 project, and the first construction contract is scheduled to be awarded in FY 2022. The Corps is scheduled to begin coordinating with industry June 15. Scoping design of L&D 22 fish passage has started and pre-project monitoring will be started as soon as fish tags are received.

Goodall reflected on the April 26-28, 2022 in-person meeting. The purpose was to initiate partner consultation as directed in NESP’s authorization. A draft meeting report will be provided soon to partner participants for their review. An important take away from the meeting was the sense of “shared accountability” among federal and state agencies in making NESP successful. Next steps include securing funding agreements to support partner agencies’ roles and responsibilities in implementing NESP.

Goodall reported on the spending allocations under the NESP FY 2022 appropriation of \$45.1 million. [Note: Subsequent to the meeting, the Corps announced on May 25, 2022 that it allocated another \$12.1 million to NESP in its FY 2022 work plan, bringing NESP’s total FY 2022 allocation to \$57.2 million.] Project areas include La Grange lock modernization, systemic mitigation, small-scale navigation efficiency improvements, and ecosystem projects. Of the ecosystem projects, four projects are scheduled to be awarded construction contracts in FY 2022. MVD recently approved several new ecosystem projects for which funding will be used to begin feasibility planning.

Fischer underscored the value of the April 2022 NESP partnership meeting and expressed appreciation to the approach agreed upon by partners to implement NESP through the approach of shared accountability. Fischer thanked the Corps for leading the meeting and to Brian Stenquist for his facilitation support. Megan Moore echoed Fischer’s comments, and observed that the meeting strengthened trust among the partnership. Moore expressed appreciation for how the meeting unfolded and its facilitation. Moore’s key take away is that systemic mitigation for the navigation improvements will require ecological expertise and planning.

Stephenson read a comment from Christine Favilla that she submitted in the chat forum. Favilla called for the Corps to conduct a supplemental programmatic environmental impact statement given the significant

deviation from the proposed action provided in NESP's NEPA. Additionally, Favilla called for the Corps to follow the requirements for employing an independent external peer review for L&D 25 lock modernization as the project exceeds the \$200 million threshold. Favilla asked for a timeline for employing these reviews. Goodall replied that the Corps is currently evaluating NEPA and ESA compliance. Goodall said the Corps will provide the results and any next steps when available.

Brian Stenquist provided observations on the April 2022 NESP meeting. Stenquist said partners were very engaged resulting in very rich discussion. Stenquist applauded Andrew Goodall and Kirsten Wallace for creating an effective meeting design. The important conclusions are that NESP will only be successful with its robust, committed partnership, that we must be bold and awesome, and that agency staff cannot just do more of the same things faster and succeed. In response to a question from Stenquist, Goodall confirmed that the NESP partners will determine priorities and the program will be implemented accordingly.

### **Inland Waterways Users Board Report**

David Frantz pointed to Section 2002 of WRDA 2014, through which Congress directed the Corps to develop a 20-year capital investment strategy and update the strategy every five years. The purpose is to organize a risk-informed portfolio investment approach to lock construction and major rehabilitation that maximizes system performance. The strategy provides a nationally consistent and repeatable approach across the entire inland marine transportation system for buying down risk and improving system reliability as well as mitigating economic impacts to marine stakeholders.

Since the publication of the 2020 Capital Investment Strategy Report, several policy and funding events have affected the schedule and sequence of lock projects. This includes a shift in the Inland Waterways Trust Fund cost share of projects and construction new starts of projects through IJJA and annual appropriations. Additionally, the FY 2023 President's budget includes \$39.3 million for Chickamauga Lock. Therefore, the Corps is currently undergoing an update of the investment strategy using the same categories, filters, and prioritization process as used in developing the 2020 strategy. As a result, the Category 1 projects were updated to reflect recent new starts and appropriations. The Category 2 projects are the same as the 2020 version with the addition of Brazos River Floodgates and Colorado River Locks. All of NESP locks are included in Categories 1 and 2.

Frantz reviewed the process for updating the 2022 strategy. As part of the process, the Corps met with navigation industry representatives on March 28 to review the 2020 report and to discuss the process for updating the report. The draft updates were briefed to the Inland Waterways Users Board on April 20. The Corps is currently reviewing and revising the strategy based on the Board's feedback, including to develop a new initial baseline scenario. The Corps plans to update the Inland Waterways Users Board at its next meeting fall 2022.

Kirsten Wallace recalled that, at the April 2022 Inland Waterways Users Board meeting, the Corps described its preference for maintaining a cushion in the Inland Waterway Trust Fund to support cost overruns associated with Kentucky Lock. Wallace asked how the Kentucky Lock project might impact NESP. Frantz explained that the Trust Fund revenue is around \$115 million to \$120 million annually, and the Corps considers spending those monies among the set of projects in construction. There needs to be sufficient balance in the Trust Fund to support any new project. L&D 25 will not be affected by Kentucky Lock cost overruns because it was fully funded through the IJJA. Frantz added that OMB has supported smaller investments in major rehabilitation projects that can be completed in two to three years.

## UMRS Bottomland Forest Birds

Nat Miller provided background on Audubon and its interest in partnering with the Upper Mississippi River partnership to protect, enhance, and restore important floodplain forest habitat for birds. Miller cited new evidence that nearly 3 billion of the U.S. bird population (or 30 percent of the population) was lost over the last 50 years. While steep declines have occurred in all habitats, nearly 25 percent of those birds lost were forest birds. Miller also underscored the research conclusions that conversation is effective. Investment in conservation results in wildlife population increases and endangered species recovery. Miller said monitoring bird populations is crucial for assessing conservation work and communicating the value of conservation investment.

Tara Hohman discussed Audubon's efforts on the Upper Mississippi River System, including avian monitoring and science, the benefits of birds and their habitats, habitat restoration and management and the benefit of conservation to forest species and surrounding communities. Hohman explained that Audubon initiated a partnership with the Corps about 10 years ago building from the NESP UMR System Forest Stewardship Plan, which called for conserving bird populations through active forest management. The Plan acknowledged that birds act as important indicators of forest health and condition. Hohman said the overall project goals were to develop a rigorous, scalable landbird monitoring program that is compatible with existing projects. Additionally, Audubon is employing responsible data management methods in order to maximize the value of data over a long term. Audubon intends to use the information to evaluate the relationships between birds and habitat and influence management methods. Hohman said Audubon staff at the Riverlands Center near St. Louis monitors birds over roughly 49,000 acres of bottomland forests, and in 2020, initiated a similar with the Corps by employing avian monitoring over 11,000 acres in Minnesota.

Hohman illustrated the outcomes of Audubon's avian monitoring program. The standardized bird surveys are used to develop bird-density estimates and assess trends over time, to prioritize habitat across the UMR watershed, and to fill data gaps for managing floodplain forests for birds and associated wildlife.

Hohman underscored the value of partnerships to Audubon. For example, Audubon's avian monitoring data is integrated into the Corps' forest inventory and its results are used to inform forest management. Bird-related prescriptions benefit the forests, birds, and other associated wildlife. Hohman explained that long term datasets are the only reliable way to track populations and habitat trends over time.

Hohman said Audubon is calling for building intensive coverage necessary for adaptive management and spatial prioritization, including through localized, intensively-surveyed hotspots scattered along the UMR. Surveyors must be trained using similar or comparable protocols. The hotspots should be located in areas with ongoing or future bird and/or vegetation monitoring with planned forest management or restoration.

In response to a question from Jim Fischer, Hohman said electronic listening devices have several challenges that do not make them a better option than trained surveyors. In response to a question from Joe Summerlin, Miller said there is some new research in Canada correlating bird loss with insect populations. There is more to be learned about the ability to correlate avian monitoring with estimating impacts to insects.

Sabrina Chandler recognized the tremendous work being conducted by Audubon. Chandler said Audubon's partnership has been uniquely valuable to the USFWS, providing research and other resources that USFWS would not be able to recreate on its own. Chandler said she is excited to see the partnership continue and the work that will be accomplished together through partnership.

## State Reports on American Rescue Plan Act Funds

UMRBA Board members provided the following report on their use of American Rescue Plan Act funds in ways related to the UMRS, as follows:

*Illinois* – Loren Wobig reported that Illinois mostly allocated its American Rescue Plan Act funds to human services-related priorities. The state is also investing significantly in dam safety within its coastal program. Wobig said Illinois increased the money available in its revolving loan funds that are managed by Illinois EPA. Illinois is also allocating resources to assist communities in determining their water infrastructure needs and assisting them in applying for the respective grants.

*Iowa* – No report.

*Minnesota* – Barb Naramore reported that Minnesota allocated its American Rescue Plan Act funds in two broad categories: immediate COVID-19 response and replenishment and repayment of the unemployment insurance trust fund. Naramore noted that the Minnesota legislature was not able to overcome an impasse with respect to its allocations of Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. It is unknown if the legislature will reach an agreement and what that agreement might provide for infrastructure investment in Minnesota.

*Missouri* – Jennifer Hoggatt reported that Missouri is making available \$410 million in Community Water Infrastructure Grants as listed below. Missouri views water infrastructure projects as being responsive to an identified need to achieve or to maintain an adequate level of service. Hoggatt explained that Missouri will apply competitive scoring criteria that will favor communities having affordability challenges. Missouri created a one-stop shop web portal for all state of Missouri grants supported through American Rescue Plan Act funds.

Hoggatt said American Rescue Plan Act funds were used to establish the Missouri Hydrology Information Center. Goals for the Center are to:

- Enhance surface water monitoring and predictive capability to protect life and property
- Expand soil moisture mapping
- Expand water resources mapping and imagery
- Display readily-accessible weather conditions

Dru Buntin added that the grants are 100 percent paid, not requiring a cost-share. The grants will be important for communities to meet environmental regulations. The challenge for replacing lead service lines is knowing where they exist. The first step needs to be developing an inventory. Hoggatt and Buntin explained that Missouri is planning to install 50 soil moisture monitoring sites around the state; it currently has 17 sites.

Matt Vitello reported that Missouri will also be using American Rescue Plan Act funds to restore Columbia Bottoms by realigning the levee. Missouri is partnering with the Corps and the respective levee district. Initial investigations are underway. It is estimated that the project could reconnect 2,000 acres to the Missouri and Mississippi Rivers. Per the state's guidelines associated with its American Rescue Plan Act, project expenses must be obligated by 2024 and spent by 2026.



Wisconsin – No report.

### UMR Basin Charter

Lauren Salvato provided context by explaining that UMRBA’s Board has directed the Association to convene state experts to assess the Charter’s current provisions and identify any recommended revisions to the Charter to ensure that it advances the Charter’s stated principles. Salvato explained that the *ad hoc* group formed to evaluate the Charter implemented a three-phase scenario exercise in spring 2022 for the purposes of better understanding 1) how the states’ unique approaches and authorities to regulating water use may influence implementation of the Charter and 2) evaluate important contextual questions around the Charter’s provisions. Phase one focused on individual states developing potential scenarios within their respective state boundaries. In phase two, the states reviewed proposals from the other four states. And, in phase three, state agency reviewed several prepared questions. As a result, the *ad hoc* group is proposing to the UMRBA Board for its consideration the following recommendations for next steps:

- Evaluate options for revising the Charter’s provisions, including relating to:
  - Definitions for diversion (e.g., HUC 2) and consumptive use
  - Geographic extent of impacts considered (e.g., mainstem of Upper Mississippi River or entire basin)
  - Tribal communities, tribal land acknowledgement, and tribal treaty and/or legal rights to basin water
  - Priority uses of water
- Develop a cumulative impact assessment of the UMR basin (including water budget, consumptive uses and diversions out of the basin) considering current impacts and future vulnerabilities
- Develop educational materials about the UMR Basin Charter and the basin’s water budget and water uses as well as legal issues relating to the Charter.

In response to a question from Barb Naramore, Salvato said the *ad hoc* group has not yet put thought into the appropriate resolution of the water budget. Salvato anticipates scoping would involve defining the resolution along with scoping a process, costs, and timeline for developing a water budget. Loren Wobig asked if the group considered low flow standards or parameters for defining low flows. Wobig added that it would be helpful to understand if and how other UMRBA member states consider low flow. Salvato said the group is recommending the cumulative impact assessment to understand vulnerabilities, such as low flows during drought, and that the assessment might inform any recommendations for low flow considerations in the Charter. Wobig added that the comparison of states approaches would be valuable regardless of the vulnerability assessment. Naramore explained that Minnesota evaluates flows based on what is estimated to be a sustainable average base flow without long term implications. In addition to low-flow scenarios, Minnesota weighs what could be withdrawn without adversely affecting industry and other uses. Salvato acknowledged that the group touched on these types of questions. While the group has also used the Great Lakes Charter for reference, it has thought about these types of questions in relation to the UMR basin as a large riverine system rather than a lakes system. Salvato said she would relay the Board’s questions and thoughts to the group as they flesh out the recommendations.

## Illinois Silver Jackets Projects

After providing context of the Silver Jackets program, Terra McParland described the various benefits of Silver Jacket's investments in Illinois. Silver Jackets fosters multi-agency collaboration, providing funding for projects that, through interagency action, advance progress from risk assessment and awareness to risk reduction or management. Of the Silver Jackets' funded projects, 25 percent of projects raise flood risk awareness, 41 percent of projects prompt flood risk action, and 32 percent of projects reduce or manage flood risk.

McParland explained that Illinois has strategically focused its resources for the purposes of developing structure-specific risk data statewide. Illinois recently published a new interactive web viewer that illustrates "structures at flood risk" (SAFR) – i.e., potential flood depths and costs associated with various flood events. The web viewer provides an inventory of structures with associated flood risk information with corresponding estimated economic damages within communities as well as individual structures.

McParland discussed Illinois' efforts to define hazards (using studies, LiDAR, and depth grids) and assets (using building inventory, assessor's data, and survey data) as well as estimate economic losses. McParland said this work is complete on the Upper Mississippi and Illinois Rivers, and that Illinois plans to expand the database throughout the state. McParland illustrated the utility of the interactive web viewer, including its scalability and visual depictions of flood and economic risk information.

McParland explained that Illinois' intended applications for the data are to target mitigation, identify and quantify potential losses (including through hot spot analysis), and prioritize buyouts as well as to develop plans for hazard mitigation, community flood mitigation, and future land use. Future plans for enhancing the web viewer include adding new results studies, archiving historical data, migrate the web viewer to new platforms as they become available, expedite studies and lower their costs, and establish data sharing protocols. McParland illustrated Illinois' other mapping tools to assist in informing flood risk: elevation finder tool and dynamic inundation mapping.

Loren Wobig suggested that UMRBA overlay the economic risk information with the Corps' new hydraulic modeling to strategically select geographic areas to build resilience. Shawn Sullivan observed that having clear understanding of the states' objectives helps the Corps assess how its authorities might be helpful.

McParland expressed appreciation to all of the partners who have participated through the Illinois Silver Jackets, including those who have developed project proposals and helped advance joint priorities.

In response to a question from Mark Gaikowski, Wobig said the SAFR database allows for analyses of flood risk planning at various spatial scales. In other words, homeowners, renters, or business owners can use the information to evaluate their own risk assessments. Communities can use the information to base planning decisions. And, the tool can provide a means for evaluating particular scenarios at a regional scale with a better quantifiable understanding of economic impacts at various flood magnitudes.

## **Federal Fiscal Reports**

### *U.S. Army Corps of Engineers*

Col. Kevin Golinghorst provided remarks on behalf of the St. Louis District, underscoring the importance partnerships in all areas of the Corps' work. Col. Golinghorst reported on recent funding allocations and policy decisions related to the St. Louis District's current workload – i.e., NESP L&D 25, East St. Louis levee repair, and the consolidated closure of L&Ds 24-27. Col. Golinghorst reported that the District received \$175 million through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) and Disaster Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2022 (DRSSA). Those funds will be used to fulfill backlog maintenance needs.

Renee Turner provided an update to MVD's overall programmatic efforts and current budget development activities. Turner explained that the Corps is currently executing the FY 2022 program under significant funding through the annual appropriations, IIJA, and disaster relief supplemental. Final spending numbers are still unknown as the Corps' still has yet to publish its FY 2022 work plan, which is anticipated to be released this week. The work plan will likely have additional funding to the Division and Upper Mississippi River Districts. MVD is also defending the FY 2023 program, noting the delay in the President's release of the budget.

Turner explained broader funding trends for MVD since FY 2021 as well as for Upper Mississippi River projects and programs. Turner gave more details on the currently-funded projects in the region, including NESP, Brandon Road, UMRRL, Mel Price, East St. Louis, the Illinois Waterway major rehabilitation, and O&M work for the navigation channel throughout the system. Turner reiterated that the Corps anticipates receiving even more funding to the basin through the FY 2022 work plan.

### *U.S. Geological Survey*

Mark Gaikowski reported that planning continues for the Mississippi River Science Forum that will be held in winter 2022/2023. According to the appropriations legislation, the Forum must occur before March 2023. USGS also continues to implement the Illinois River Next Generation Water Observing System (NGWOS), focusing on procuring and employing equipment. In subsequent years, NGWOS will focus on data collection and observations as well as analysis. Bipartisan Infrastructure Law investments through USGS support biosurveillance and invasive species monitoring at ports of entry. USGS's Water Resources allocated about \$1 million to work in the Upper Mississippi River System related to aquatic invasive species, microplastics, and new or improve sensor systems.

Gaikowski reported that USGS is continuing its efforts to develop the American Conservation and Stewardship Atlas to develop and track a clear baseline of information on lands and waters that are conserved or restored. The purpose is to measure the progress of conservation, stewardship, and restoration efforts in a manner that reflects the goals and principles of the America the Beautiful Initiative.

Gaikowski explained that UMESC is continuing to test the underwater acoustic deterrent system for invasive carp. Over 1,300 invasive and native fish species have been tagged. Collectively, the tagged fish have shown how they interact with the lock structures and barges. Gaikowski noted that UMESC has tagged mooneye fish, which are preferred host fish for mussels. UMESC hopes to learn more about their interaction in an effort to improve the success and survival of native mussels. In response to a question

from Kirsten Wallace, Gaikowski explained that USGS is working with the Corps to ply the telemetry dataset to L&D 22 for use in the project's adaptive management component.

Gaikowski added that UMESC is undergoing a renovation. Ultimately, the Water Quality lab will double in size.

### *U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service*

Sabrina Chandler reported that the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law authorized appropriations to DOI of \$30.6 billion to be executed over five years, with \$455 million of that funding allocated to USFWS for programs related to the America the Beautiful Initiative. The funding is mostly allocated in other areas of the nation outside of the UMRS. Chandler noted potential opportunities within the UMRS to benefit from the \$200 million to the National Fish Passage Program.

Chandler reported that USFWS is just notifying the regions of their respective allocations under the FY 2022 appropriations process. The allocations to Region 3 are as follows:

- Ecological Services: \$8 million
- Aquatic habitat: Not available yet
- Refuge system: \$37.7 million
- Deferred maintenance: \$18 million

Chandler reported that USFWS is anticipating significant shortfalls in FY 2023 per the President's budget. USFWS is under a hiring freeze, and it will be tough for USFWS to engage in NESP and UMRR under current staffing levels.

### **Administrative Issues**

#### *UMRBA FY 2023 Budget and Dues*

In response to a suggestion from Tim Hall, Steve Galarneau moved and Rick Pohlman seconded a motion to approve the draft FY 2023 UMRBA budget amendment as provided to the Board on May 24, 2022. This approval includes setting FY 2023 dues at \$63,500 per state. In response to a suggestion from Barb Naramore to make the two actions separate, the motion was withdrawn.

Barb Naramore moved and Rick Pohlman seconded a motion to set FY 2023 dues at \$63,500 per state. The motion was approved unanimously.

Steve Galarneau moved and Jennifer Hoggatt seconded a motion to approve the draft FY 2023 UMRBA budget amendment as provided to the Board on May 24, 2022. The motion was approved unanimously.

#### *Future Meeting Schedule*

August 2022 — St. Paul, Minnesota

- UMRBA quarterly meeting — August 9
- UMRR Coordinating Committee quarterly meeting — August 10

November 2022 — Quad Cities

- UMRBA quarterly meeting — November 15
- UMRB Coordinating Committee quarterly meeting — November 16

February-March 2023 — Virtual

- UMRBA quarterly meeting — February 28
- UMRB Coordinating Committee quarterly meeting — March 1

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:47 p.m.