Minutes of the
84th Quarterly Meeting
of the
Upper Mississippi River Basin Association

November 20, 2002
Bloomington, Minnesota

The meeting was called to order at 9:05 a.m. by UMRBA Chair Kevin Szcodronski. The following State Representatives and Federal Liaison Representatives were present:

Gary Clark	Illinois Alternate (IL DNR)
John Hey	Iowa Representative (IA DOT)
Kevin Szcodronski	Iowa Representative (IA DNR)
Steve Morse	Minnesota Alternate (MN DNR)
Dick Lambert	Minnesota Alternate (MN DOT)
Steve Johnson	Minnesota Alternate (MN DNR)
Mike Wells	Missouri Alternate (MO DNR)
Terry Moe	Wisconsin Alternate (WI DNR)
Steve Cobb	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (MVD)
Bill Franz	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (Region 5)
Leslie Holland-Bartels	U.S. Geological Survey (UMESC)
Charlie Wooley	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Region 3)
Ken Hinterlong	Federal Emergency Management Agency (Region 5)
Bob Goodwin	Maritime Administration
Jason Neubauer	U.S. Coast Guard

Others in attendance:

Tom Lutgen	Minnesota DNR
Amy Denz	Minnesota DNR
Scott Stuewe	Illinois DNR
Gary Christoff	Missouri DOC
John Sullivan	Wisconsin DNR
Tom Boland	Iowa DNR
Rich Worthington	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (HQ)
Greg Ruff	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (MVD)
Don Powell	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (MVP)
Stuart Dobberpuhl	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (MVP)
Shirley Johnson	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (MVR)
Jerry Skalak	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (MVR)
Deb Foley	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (MVS)
Jon Kauffeld	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Region 3)

Don Hultman	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (UMR Refuge)
Tim Yager	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Region 3)
Mark Aurit	PBJJ (FEMA)
Dan McGuiness	Audubon
Megan Finnessy	Upper Mississippi River Basin Association
Barb Naramore	Upper Mississippi River Basin Association
Holly Stoerker	Upper Mississippi River Basin Association

Moe Recognition

Chair Kevin Szcodronski presented Terry Moe with a Certificate of Appreciation on behalf of the UMRBA, thanking him for his many years of service to Wisconsin DNR and the UMRBA. Moe will be retiring in January 2003.

Meeting Minutes

Terry Moe moved and Gary Clark seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the August 7, 2002 meeting as drafted. The motion was approved by consensus.

Executive Director's Report

Holly Stoerker reported that many of the committees and task forces that UMRBA supports have met in the past few months. The Early Warning Monitoring Network Scoping Group has had two conference calls: August 21 and October 18. The UMR Spills Group met on October 16-17. The Water Quality Task Force has had two conference calls and plans to meet December 11-12 in the Quad Cities.

Stoerker introduced Megan Finnessy, UMRBA's new Water Quality Project Coordinator. Stoerker also reported that Zac Stanley is the newest addition to the project staff working on the spills planning and mapping project.

Stoerker reported that there was discussion at the Washington, D.C. National Water Policy Dialogue in September regarding the need for federal water policy integration and creation of river basin or watershed groups. The Interstate Conference on Water Policy (ICWP) has proposed a research project to document existing and historical institutional arrangements and policies related to this issue. In particular, the project will describe the rise and fall of organizations such as the Water Resources Council and river basin commissions. The UMRBA may be one of a series of case studies for the project.

Stoerker reported that UMRBA staff has had discussions with the staff of the Missouri River Basin Association regarding the potential for a joint meeting of the two organizations. UMRBA representatives expressed general support for the idea.

Flow Frequency Study

Jerry Skalak and Shirley Johnson made a presentation on the status and preliminary results of the Flow Frequency Study. Johnson explained the methodology used. Preliminary results

suggest that discharges will change little at the St. Paul gage, will decrease slightly at Clinton, and will increase slightly at Keokuk. The largest increase will be at Hannibal, where the 100-year flow will increase from 374,000 cfs to 455,000 cfs.

The study is using cross-sections at every half mile of the river. There will be rating curves developed for every cross-section. There are 2400 cross-sections on the Upper Mississippi and 1090 on the Illinois River.

Levee elevations were also verified as part of the study. On the Mississippi River there are 80 levee elevations, 13 of which were changed. On the Illinois River there are 40 levee elevations, with 15 changes made.

Johnson also described some of the challenges related to interpolation. In particular, the Illinois River is difficult to model because of high attenuation and storage in the pools. Confluences are also difficult to deal with due to the influence of tributary backwaters on the rating curve. Reaches needing special consideration due to backwater effects include the UMR from its confluence with the Ohio River upstream to Thebes, the UMR in the vicinity of the Missouri River, and the Illinois River from its confluence with the UMR upstream to Meredosia.

Risk and uncertainty analysis is critical to levee certification, as well as cost-benefit and national economic development analysis. Variables include record length of flow frequency curves, regulated vs. unregulated relationship, levee overtopping dynamics, and rating curve issues.

Johnson was asked if it is surprising that the discharges are apparently changing so little. She explained that discharges did increase significantly in the Hannibal area. This was the result of changes over time in statistics, as well as the fact that when the 1979 profiles were done, too much credit was given to tributary reservoirs. This study shows that those reservoirs lose their effectiveness after the 100-year levels.

Jerry Skalak explained that there has been a three-month slip since the last study schedule presented to UMRBA. Public Open houses are now scheduled for May 2003, with the final report out by June 30, 2003. There will be cost increases associated with the schedule change.

Skalak explained that the Flow Frequency Study will provide the technical analysis and background needed for the Comprehensive Plan. This technical analysis also raises a variety of policy issues, including questions associated with the Corps' responsibility under PL 84-99, levee certification, implications for the Missouri River Master Manual, and security issues related to public availability of digital elevation data. Holly Stoerker cautioned that the public would likely expect answers to these kinds of questions at the workshops. She suggested that the public presentations at the workshops simplify the highly technical information as much as possible and describe how it relates to policy and planning issues.

Skalak explained that following completion of the study, the new flood profiles will be used to compute the floodway and update flood insurance rate maps (FIRMs). Skalak said the Corps has already submitted a scope of work to FEMA for the three next step tasks, including scoping UMRS digital FIRM tasks ($100,000), computing the UMRS floodway ($997,000), and

enhanced Level I county-wide mapping for four counties in the Quad Cities area ($1.194 million). FEMA approved funding for the UMR floodway computation work in October.

Floodplain Mapping Issues

Holly Stoerker described recent discussions with FEMA regarding funding for updating flood insurance rate maps (FIRMs). Over a year ago, FEMA had suggested to the states that the $30 million cost of updating UMRS FIRMs be cost-shared. Specifically, FEMA proposed that the states, FEMA, and the Corps each pay one third. Subsequently, FEMA's FY 2003 proposed budget included a substantial increase for floodplain mapping. As a result, the state floodplain managers suggested that FEMA write letters to the Governors explaining the cost-sharing proposal and its relationship to FEMA's budget proposal. Given the recent gubernatorial elections, FEMA has decided not to send the letters at this time.

Ken Hinterlong explained that FEMA has not received Congressional funding for mapping since 1983, except for the funds from the flood insurance surcharge. He described the interest in providing $200 - $300 million for mapping in FY 2003 as a signal that FEMA should look beyond the constituency of flood insurance policy holders to fund mapping.

Hinterlong said FEMA was interested in investing about $1 million to advance the mapping work needed in the 130 UMR counties. As a result, the Corps was asked to submit a scope of work for four tasks, including converting UNET to RAS, calibration, preparation and coordination of a steady-state floodway, and incorporation of geo-coded floodway into existing Flow Frequency Study DTM. Hinterlong noted that a floodway cannot be identified for a single county, but must be based on a regional model and floodway profile endorsed by the basin states. Therefore, FEMA will be seeking to begin consultation with the states in the near future. He suggested that the UMRBA or the Flow Frequency Task Force host a conference call in mid-December. Gary Clark said that Illinois is very concerned with the definition of the floodway and will not accept a single floodway for the river.

Tom Lutgen asked if individual communities could use the new profiles before they are formally adopted, noting that some Minnesota communities may want to use the new lower profiles as soon as possible. Hinterlong indicated that FEMA cannot sanction use of lower elevations in place of existing ones until the new floodways are finalized through the official mapping revisions. However, if FEMA has no previously published floodway or profile, or if the new profile is higher, then the community can use the newer more restrictive profile.

Hinterlong emphasized that FEMA would like the 130 UMR maps updated within the next 3-5 years. However, FEMA realizes that the UMR is not each state's highest priority for updates. In particular, Illinois and Minnesota have not identified the UMR as a priority. However, there is a more urgent need in Iowa and Missouri.

UMRBA Water Quality Coordination Project

Barb Naramore presented an overview of the information being compiled and evaluated as part of the UMRBA's water quality coordination project. She noted that the project is not intended to produce uniformity among the states, but rather to identify and explain the differences

among the states, to enhance consistency where appropriate, and to lay the groundwork for ongoing future coordination.

Using a series of overhead maps, Naramore explained the differences among the states with regard to UMR reach designations, data used for assessments, designated uses, 305(b) assessments, and 303(d) listings of impaired waters. With regard to data, Naramore explained that Minnesota and Iowa appear to make the most use of data sources other than their own. Factors limiting states' use of other data sources include age of the data, data quality, agency policies and credible data laws, and relevance to state standards. With regard to the water quality assessments required by Section 305(b) of the Clean Water Act, Naramore noted that the majority of the UMR is reported by the states as fully or partially supporting its designated uses. However, not all reaches are assessed for all applicable designated uses. For example, Illinois designates the entire UMR for public water supply, but does not assess all reaches for that use.

In describing the states' 303(d) lists of impaired waters, Naramore noted that all five states include at least one reach of the UMR on their 2002 draft list. Causes of impairment include turbidity, ammonia, PCBs, mercury, arsenic, pathogens, nutrients, and habitat alterations. She explained that de-listing is emerging as an important and controversial issue. For example, the basis for Missouri's decision to list the UMR for habitat loss in 1998, but not in 2002, will likely be an important consideration in EPA's approval.

Naramore also explained Iowa's listing of two UMR reaches for arsenic impairment as an example of how differences between the Clean Water Act and Safe Drinking Water Act can confuse the public. In this example, Iowa lists two stretches of the UMR for arsenic, based on data from Illinois. However, Illinois does not list any portion of the river for arsenic, yet has the entire river designated for public water supply use. In both states, UMR drinking water suppliers are meeting the Safe Drinking Water Act standard for arsenic. However, Iowa has a more restrictive arsenic standard under the Clean Water Act and that standard is not being met.

Naramore said that these are the types of differences that the UMRBA project seeks to identify and explain, while in the process laying the groundwork for enhanced interstate coordination in the future.

UMRCC Water Quality Assessment

John Sullivan presented an overview of the UMR Water Quality Assessment undertaken under the auspices of the Upper Mississippi River Conservation Committee (UMRCC). Sullivan explained that the project involved compiling UMR water quality data for the period 1980-1999. Data from a variety of state and federal agencies, as well as Metropolitan Council and Alcoa, Inc., was grouped by 5-year intervals and organized by 15 river reaches defined by hydrologic unit codes (HUCs). Variables selected for analysis included temperature, dissolved oxygen, pH, total nitrogen, nitrate and nitrite-N, ammonia-N, specific conductivity, total phosphorous, and total suspended solids. Fish tissue contaminant data was also evaluated.

Sullivan explained that there is a significant amount of data north of the Quad Cities, but lots of data gaps between the Quad Cities and St. Louis. USGS has the most monitoring sites, although the states and Twin Cities Metropolitan Council also do a lot of monitoring.

Highlights noted by Sullivan include: Suspended solids are highest downstream of the Illinois and Missouri Rivers. Total ammonia nitrogen has decreased over the past 20 years downstream of the Twin Cities due to improvements in point source discharges. PCBs in carp have dropped significantly over the past 20 years.

Sullivan concluded by describing the recommendations contained in the report, including:

- Update the assessment on 5-year intervals
- Continue to coordinate monitoring and increase monitoring coverage
- Conduct trend analysis for locations with at least 20 years of data
- Incorporate flow data into water quality data sets
- Conduct longitudinal assessments of fish tissue contaminants at 5-year intervals

EPA Watershed Initiative

EPA has proposed $21 million for a new watershed grant program. Each Governor and Tribal leader was invited to nominate 2 intra-state watersheds and an unlimited number of interstate watersheds for the nationwide competition. EPA is expected to select 20 watersheds in January. Each UMRBA state representative reported on the watersheds that their Governor will be nominating:

Wisconsin: Terry Moe reported that Wisconsin's nominations will be the Menominee Watershed, which discharges to Lake Michigan in Milwaukee, and the Upper Galena, which is a tributary to the Mississippi River. Although DNR had asked to be the clearinghouse for nominations in Wisconsin, the two watersheds that were ultimately chosen by the Governor were submitted directly to the Governor's Office.

Illinois: Gary Clark reported that Governor Ryan used his natural resources sub-cabinet as a clearinghouse to select watershed nominees. Illinois will be submitting two interstate watersheds: the Kankakee and Fox. Other nominees include Piasa Creek and the Kaskaskia Watershed.

Missouri: Mike Wells reported that Missouri DNR screened the watershed candidates for the Governor. Two in-state and 3 bi-state watersheds will be nominated, including the White River and Table Rock area.

Minnesota: Steve Morse reported that the Pollution Control Agency is the lead agency for organizing watershed nominations in Minnesota. The Governor's nominees include two Minnesota River basins: Hawk Creek and Blue Earth.

Iowa: Kevin Szcodronski reported that DNR coordinated the watershed selection process in Iowa. Four watersheds were submitted to DNR and three were chosen by the Governor to be nominated. They include the Upper Iowa, which is a UMR interstate basin with Minnesota; Rathburn Lake, which is a tributary to the Missouri River and is the state's largest rural water supply; and the Makoqueta River, which is a UMR tributary.

Election Results

Holly Stoerker distributed a summary of the 2002 election results in the basin states, noting that three of the five states now have new governors. She also commented that redistricting was a factor in several House races. For example, Representative Boswell's district in Iowa is no longer a UMR district.

Future Meetings

The future meeting schedule for the combined GLC, UMRBA, and EMP-CC meetings includes February 25-27, 2003 in Rock Island, Illinois and May 13-15, 2003 in St. Louis. It was agreed that the summer meetings will be held August 5-7, 2003 in the Twin Cities, Minnesota.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:02 p.m.