

**Minutes of the
101st Quarterly Meeting
of the
Upper Mississippi River Basin Association**

**February 20, 2007
St. Louis, Missouri**

The meeting was called to order at 10:35 a.m. by UMRBA Vice Chair Dru Buntin. The following were present:

UMRBA Representatives and Alternates:

Gary Clark	Illinois (DNR)
Martin Konrad	Iowa (DNR)
Laurie Martinson	Minnesota (DNR)
Rebecca Wooden	Minnesota (DNR)
Dick Lambert	Minnesota (DOT)
Mike Wells	Missouri (DNR)
Dru Buntin	Missouri (DNR)
Todd Ambs	Wisconsin (DNR)
Gretchen Benjamin	Wisconsin (DNR)

Federal Liaisons:

Terry Smith	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (MVD)
Bill Franz	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (Region 5)
Mike Jawson	U.S. Geological Survey (UMESC)
Charles Wooley	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Region 3)
Mike Sullivan	USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

Others in attendance:

Chuck Corell	Iowa Department of Natural Resources
Janet Sternburg	Missouri Department of Conservation
Rich Worthington	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (HQ)
Chuck Spitzack	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (MVR)
Marv Hubbell	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (MVR)
Ken Barr	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (MVR)
Hank DeHaan	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (MVR)
Kevin Bluhm	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (MVP)
Jeff DeZellar	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (MVP)
Deanne Strauser	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (MVS)
Dave Gates	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (MVS)
David Busse	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (MVS)
Brian Johnson	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (MVS)
Don Hultman	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (UMRNW & FR)
Joyce Collins	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Marion, IL)
Mike Slifer	U.S. Geological Survey (MO WSC)
Bob Goodwin	U.S. Maritime Administration
Mark Carr	AEP MEMCO LLC

Brad Walker	Prairie River Network (IL)
Tom Boland	MACTEC St. Louis
Dan McGuiness	Audubon
Holly Stoerker	Upper Mississippi River Basin Association
Dave Hokanson	Upper Mississippi River Basin Association
Barb Naramore	Upper Mississippi River Basin Association

Meeting Minutes

Dick Lambert asked that his comment regarding MarAd on page 9 of the minutes be corrected. In particular, he suggested that the word “land” be inserted preceding “congestion” and the term “Intermodal” be used to describe the MarAd partnership.

Martin Konrad moved and Gary Clark seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the November 15, 2006 meeting, as amended by Lambert. The motion was approved unanimously.

Executive Director’s Report

Holly Stoerker highlighted the following items from the written Executive Director’s Report:

- The EMP Long Term Resource Monitoring Program will be embarking on a strategic planning effort to plan for the next five years of the program. The EMP Coordinating Committee (EMP-CC) will begin discussions of the process this week. UMRBA staff has been assisting the state EMP-CC members in developing their perspectives on the goals and assumptions related to the strategic planning process.
- UMRBA staff are involved in developing hazardous spill response strategies for the greater St. Louis area and the St. Croix River. The next meeting of the UMR Hazardous Spills Group is scheduled for April 18-19, 2007.
- Derek Martin left the UMRBA staff in December to move back to Missouri. Interviews with candidates to fill the OPA project vacancy are underway.
- At the November 2006 quarterly meeting, UMRBA approved the proposal for two UMRBA-sponsored meetings addressing the relationship between the Clean Water Act and ecosystem restoration. However that approval was contingent upon securing funding for the project, which is estimated to cost \$25,000. Thus far, the Corps has agreed to provide \$4000 from its contract with UMRBA for EMP staff services. In addition, EPA Region 5 has identified approximately \$15,000 for the project. Stoerker recommended that the project proceed with the \$19,000 that is available. In response to a question about the implications of proceeding without full funding, Stoerker explained that all direct costs would be covered with the funds available. Staff costs are very rough estimates and the project will need to fit within existing workload. Laurie Martinson moved and Todd Ambs seconded a motion to proceed with the project with available funds from the Corps and EPA.

Interbasin Diversion Charter Annual Consultation

Dru Buntin explained that the Interbasin Diversion Charter, signed by the Governors in 1989, requires that, at UMRBA Annual Meetings, each State report on out-of-basin diversion requests made during the previous year that exceeded an average of 5 million gallons per day during any 30 day period. The following reports were offered in accordance with the Charter:

Missouri—Mike Wells reported that there were no diversion requests in Missouri. However, Dru Buntin commented that Missouri is in the process of preparing comments on a proposed diversion in the

Red River/Missouri River Basins. Missouri's concerns include the precedent that may be set by the diversion and the capacity of the pumping equipment. In response to a question from Martin Konrad about whether the irrigation component of the project had been eliminated, Buntin explained that groundwater recharge still needs to be defined and Missouri is concerned that the pumping capacity may support increased future diversions if the authorization is changed.

Wisconsin — Todd Ambs reported there were no diversion requests in Wisconsin. He commented that there appears to be less concern about diversions from the Mississippi River Basin than diversions from the Great Lakes Basin.

Minnesota — Laurie Martinson said Minnesota has no diversion requests to report. She noted that Minnesota passed the Great Lakes Protection Compact on February 15.

Illinois — Gary Clark reported there were no diversion requests in Illinois.

Iowa — Martin Konrad reported that there were no diversion requests in Iowa.

Holly Stoerker noted that UMRBA staff will send letters to the Governors reporting on the results of the annual consultation required under the 1989 Charter.

Navigation and Ecosystem Sustainability Program

Economic Reevaluation — Chuck Spitzack provided an overview of the status of the Economic Reevaluation. In March 2006, the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works directed that an updated economic analysis be completed by September 2007. Drafts of the shipper response surveys are under review, transportation rate data will be available in March 2007, and traffic forecasts for non-agricultural commodities are due in April 2007.

Spitzack also described the work being done on grain forecasts, including a grain model workshop held February 14-15 in St. Louis. Dr. Bill Wilson presented the model and participants were given an opportunity to provide input and comments on the assumptions and variable ranges for scenario development. Spitzack explained that the key model parameters include U.S. ethanol demand, yield growth rates, area available for production, rail capacity, China import corn demand, growth in non-grain barge shipments, and reliability of the transportation system.

In describing the economic reevaluation, Spitzack emphasized that it will only address the navigation component and will start with reevaluation of the recommended plan from the 2004 feasibility study. One of the challenges of the reevaluation will be dealing with uncertainty. In particular, the benefits of extra capacity won't begin to be realized for many years (2017-2026), yet long term trends do not exist for some of the key considerations. Evaluation criteria will include national economic development (including non-traditional considerations such as intermodal impacts), international competitiveness, national security, national transportation strategic goals, regional economic development, environmental quality, other social effects, and whether the plan is adaptive and acceptable.

Spitzack also explained the traffic scenarios that will be developed, including a base case scenario, a high traffic scenario, low traffic scenario, and constrained scenarios for both high and low traffic. The scenarios should be available for review and comment by mid-March 2007. Gretchen Benjamin asked where the base case is within the scenario range Spitzack described. Spitzack said it had not yet been determined.

Spitzack reviewed the schedule for the remainder of the reevaluation, noting that the date for completion of the Interim Report has slipped to December 31, 2007. Holly Stoerker asked whether use

of the term “interim” suggests that there will be a “final” report. Spitzack explained that the Interim Report is a decision document. If a decision is made as a result of the interim report to proceed with a complete reevaluation, then there would be additional study and a subsequent report.

FY 07 Work Plan — Spitzack explained that the 2007 NESP work plan presented in November was based on an assumption that NESP would be funded at \$10 million in FY 07. However, a few weeks ago, as a result of Congressional action on the 2007 Continuing Resolution, all Corps programs, including NESP, went through “plus up” exercises to identify additional work that could be accomplished if more funding were available. Additional funding must be able to be fully obligated, with a high rate of expenditure.

As a result of the plus-up exercise, an additional \$8 million of capability was identified for NESP. An additional \$2 million was identified for both the EMP and the Illinois River Section 519 program. Spitzack explained that some of the additional \$8 million for NESP would be for programmatic work (\$375,000) and the economic reevaluation (\$300,000). However, most would be for additional work on navigation efficiency measures (\$5.575 million) and ecosystem restoration (\$1.750 million). Spitzack commented that he had not anticipated that the differential between ecosystem and navigation capability would be so great. However, there were more opportunities for additional expenditures and greater access to contractors for navigation-related work items than for ecosystem work items. In addition, the differential was affected by the fact that the exercise did not seek to identify any new starts. Furthermore, Spitzack noted that the differential is not as large if the EMP and Section 519 plus-ups are considered in combination with NESP. He explained that the decision was made to submit maximum capability for NESP, despite the differential. The projects that would receive the greatest increases with an additional \$8 million include:

- Locks 22, 25, and LaGrange
- Lock and Dam 22 fish passage
- Systemic environmental mitigation
- Economic reevaluation
- Pool 18 Islands, which is a new project that would still need to be agreed upon
- Corps UMRS website

First Increment Plan — Spitzack concluded his presentation by commenting on the challenges associated with the first increment of the recommended plan. For ecosystem restoration, Spitzack identified the major challenge as being reaching a \$100 million/year program by 2010 and then sustaining that level of investment for many years. He said it would require a new planning paradigm for ecosystem restoration. According to Spitzack, the primary challenge in the first increment for navigation will be achieving optimum implementation, meaning least cost with least impacts and maximum benefits. Spitzack said a draft first increment plan would be available by August 2007.

UMRS Website — Spitzack reported that the Corps is working to create an integrated UMRS website that presents all Corps programs and projects on the river system in an integrated way.

Discussion — Gretchen Benjamin expressed strong concerns about the imbalance in plus-up funds between ecosystem restoration and navigation. She commented that if the Corps had consulted with its partners, it would have been possible to identify a significant number of unanswered questions related to ecosystem restoration, for which additional funding could be put to good use. Benjamin cited mussel populations as an example of an area where additional information would be helpful, given that the presence of mussels can impact the ability to proceed with projects. She also observed that communications and public outreach is an area that would benefit from additional funding.

Chuck Spitzack explained that the NESP team leaders were asked to identify ongoing projects that could use additional funding. He expressed concern about expanding in new directions without funding in place. Ken Barr noted that part of the Pool 18 plus-up would be for mussel studies.

Benjamin asked why plus-up requests for navigation and ecosystem restoration were not even. Spitzack explained that it didn't seem wise to turn down funds, if there is more capability in one program area than another. He also noted that the ecosystem and navigation work are on different trajectories, i.e., the strategy is to build the locks quickly to minimize disruption. In addition, Spitzack said there are more planning challenges on the ecosystem side. Ramping up to a \$100 million annual ecosystem capacity takes more in-house resources. Benjamin took strong exception to Spitzack's earlier comparison of the navigation plus-up with the combined total of the NESP ecosystem, EMP, and Section 519 plus-ups.

Todd Ambs asked if the imbalance in funding may change in the future in favor of ecosystem restoration. Spitzack commented that he had originally anticipated that ecosystem spending would be higher than navigation spending in the first few years of NESP. However, this is not turning out to be the case, in part because some of the ecosystem restoration projects that were identified early in the process have been lost.

Holly Stoerker commented that it will be important to define what "comparable progress" means and how to measure it. The phrase, which is used in the NESP legislation, is often interpreted to mean equal level of annual funding, which may not be a very useful approach. Stoerker also observed that it may be difficult to justify ramping up spending on navigation PED, while simultaneously conducting an economic reevaluation of the navigation system needs.

Martin Konrad asked for clarification of the \$2 million plus-up for the EMP. Marvin Hubbell explained that the \$2 million would be in addition to the \$20 million, which is the assumed FY 07 EMP funding level. Hubbell noted that most of the \$2 million plus-up would be for HREP construction in the St. Paul District.

Announcements

Audubon — Dan McGuiness explained that Audubon's Mississippi River Program is 9 years old and involves work in three areas: bird habitat conservation, education, and public policy. To date, the focus has been primarily on education, but Audubon will be returning to its core mission, by enhancing its emphasis on birds.

Dan McGuiness distributed copies of a flyer announcing Audubon's 2007 Upper Midwest Conference, a portion of which will focus on the Mississippi River. The conference is scheduled for October 12-14, 2007 and will take place in Bloomington, Minnesota. McGuiness said he would likely be calling upon UMRBA folks to help with the conference, as well as participate. In addition, McGuiness mentioned that Audubon is working with others, including the McKnight Foundation on a "Headwaters to Gulf" conference, to be held sometime between Fall 2008 and Fall 2009.

MARC 2000 — Mark Carr described MARC 2000's recent merger with Waterways Council, Inc. (WCI) as a continuation of the trend toward consolidation of maritime groups. MARC 2000's strengths, which include coalition-building and education/outreach, will be combined with WCI's emphasis on federal budget and authorization issues. WCI is based in Arlington, Virginia, but will maintain a regional office in St. Louis, headed by Paul Rohde.

Election of Officers

Laurie Martinson moved to elect Mike Wells as UMRBA Chair and Martin Konrad as UMRBA Vice Chair. Gretchen Benjamin seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

FY 2008 Federal Budget

Environmental Protection Agency — Bill Franz reported that meeting the goal of “Clean and Safe Water” will comprise approximately 38 percent, or \$2.7 billion, of EPA’s FY 08 proposed budget. That is \$15 million less than FY 07 and \$417 million less than FY 06. Funding for Section 104(b)(3), which was one of the few sources of discretionary funding, has again been zeroed out in FY 08. Section 106 and Section 319 funding levels are relatively constant. Franz showed tables illustrating how much funding the five UMR States receive from these two EPA sources. He noted that proposed funding for the Clean Water SRF is the same in FY 08 as it was in FY 07, but down substantially from FY 05. In contrast, annual funding for the Safe Drinking Water Act SRF (\$842 million) and public water systems (\$99 million) has been fairly stable for the past few years.

Franz said that funding for Homeland Security Infrastructure Protection is slated for approximately \$35 million in FY 08, down from FY 07. Holly Stoerker asked if those funds might be a source of support for the Early Warning Monitoring Program being proposed for the UMR. Franz explained that the grants had already been chosen and funds allocated.

Franz also pointed out that funding for the Targeted Watershed Grants program has been zeroed out in FY 08.

U.S. Geological Survey — Mike Jawson presented an overview comparison of the FY 07 and FY 08 budgets for USGS and pointed out FY 08 highlights for biological research and water resources investigations. The biological research budget is proposed to increase by \$5 million for the Healthy Lands Initiative, but there will be cuts to funding for mammalian population ecology and contaminants. On the water resources side, the National Streamflow Information program is slated for a \$1.65 million increase and Hydrologic Networks & Analysis will be increased by \$1.5 million. Jawson also described specific new and continuing programs at the USGS Water Science Centers in Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, and Missouri.

Jawson explained that UMESC will be involved in two new endeavors in FY 08: the National Fish Health Initiative, which will focus on trout in the driftless area, and pharmaceuticals work, which will involve looking at the impact of endocrine disruptors on mussels in the St. Croix River. UMESC will be continuing its work on the LTRMP, which comprises approximately 40 percent of its budget. Other ongoing work areas include: amphibian research and monitoring, invasive species, resource inventory and mapping, and fisheries management chemicals and drugs.

Corps of Engineers — Terry Smith reported that the FY 08 proposed budget for the Corps is \$4.871 billion, the highest amount ever proposed for the Corps. The budget emphasizes maintenance of critical infrastructure and high return studies and construction projects. According to Smith, cost-effectiveness was an important factor in determining what construction projects were funded.

Smith noted that the EMP is one of six national priority construction projects. In addition, the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal dispersal barrier is one of three significant aquatic ecosystem restoration projects. Holly Stoerker asked what criteria have contributed to the EMP’s status as a national priority. Rich Worthington indicated that two of the key factors in determining national significance are 1) the significance of the resource and 2) whether the project is responding to degradation caused, at least in part, by another Corps project.

Terry Smith showed tables summarizing the Corps' nationwide and MVD budgets for major program areas over the past three years. He noted that MVD's GI budget is down 40 percent, largely as a result of the fact that Coastal Louisiana planning is winding down. MVD's construction budget is down 8 percent and O&M funding is up. However, Smith noted that the increase in O&M may be due to the fact that major rehab projects are now included in the O&M budget, rather than the construction budget.

Smith also presented a summary of funding for a variety of specific programs and projects on the UMR. He noted that the EMP is slated for \$23.5 million in FY 08, but NESP is not included in the Administration's proposed FY 08 budget. The NESP workplan for FY 07 reflects both a \$10 million and \$18 million funding scenario.

Holly Stoerker asked if the funding identified for the major rehabs at L&D 11, 19, 24, and 27 was adequate. Rich Worthington explained that the numbers presented do not reflect capability. Barb Naramore asked what the basis was for the proposed EMP funding level. Terry Smith and Rich Worthington said they thought it was 80 percent of capability, which was the general approach used in the past.

Dick Lambert asked how Katrina and Iraq deployments affect capabilities. Marvin Hubbell and Chuck Spitzack explained that capability has been maintained largely by increased use of outside contractors.

Fish and Wildlife Service — Charlie Wooley said that the Fish and Wildlife Service budget was stable in most areas, except the Partners Program, National Fish Passage program, and National Fish Habitat program, which are all slated for increases. The construction program request is less than last year, but Congress typically adds funding back into this account. The landowner incentive program is being eliminated, but redirected into other similar programs.

With regard to specific work on the UMR, Wooley said the Ecological Services program is estimated at about \$715,000, but there will likely be cutbacks in funding for candidate conservation efforts and environmental contaminants. Wooley said that FY 07 funding for UMR refuges is estimated at \$ 8.03 million, which is approximately the same as last year's funding. The Region 3 Refuge workforce will be declining by about 20 percent through 2012, if current trends continue. There are currently 35 refuge vacancies in Region 3 and four unfilled positions on UMR refuges. UMR refuges are targeted for 8 additional vacancies over the next 3 years. The UMR refuges also continue to need approximately \$360,000 annually for maintenance of EMP projects and acquisition funding falls short of meeting Comprehensive Conservation Plan objectives.

Wooley described the Fisheries program as having relatively stable funding over the past 2 years. In total, UMR fisheries resource offices are funded at about \$1.23 million in FY 07. The UMR Fish Hatchery at Genoa has work estimated at \$740,000 in FY 07. The LaCrosse Fish Health Center, which does disease diagnostics, is funded at about \$600,000 in FY 07.

Wooley also described the federal assistance grant programs to UMR states and the UMR and Great Lakes Region Joint Venture, which supports wetlands for migratory waterfowl and shorebirds.

U.S. Department of Agriculture — Mike Sullivan explained that the trend in the USDA budget is toward decreases in discretionary spending and increases in mandatory programs. In FY 08, NRCS' budget themes include cooperative conservation, watershed approach, and market-based approach.

Sullivan said the NRCS watershed surveys and planning are again slated for elimination in FY 08. The watershed rehabilitation program would be limited to technical assistance only for those dams with

the greatest potential for danger. The RC&D program would be cut by \$36 million and the number of coordinators reduced.

According to Sullivan, USDA's FY 08 budget includes record levels of funding for financial and technical assistance for Farm Bill programs. The Wetlands Reserve Program target has been increased to 250,000 acres, after having been at 150,000 acres the past few years. There is a slight decrease proposed for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), but an increase proposed for the Conservation Security Program (CSP). However, the CSP increase would support work in existing watersheds only, with no expansion of the program. Similarly, the proposed funding of \$58 million for the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) will support technical assistance only on existing CRP contracts.

Sullivan also presented graphs illustrating the NRCS staffing trend over the past 10 years, showing that Farm Bill programs are taking increasing time and displacing the effort previously devoted to conservation operations and other discretionary programs.

Todd Ambs asked if the trend in CRP is related to the ethanol boom. Mike Sullivan said it is not yet clear what affect ethanol is having on conservation programs.

Mike Wells indicated he would like to have UMRBA's testimony express concern about zeroing out the watershed programs. Todd Ambs suggested that UMRBA comment on the Administration's changes to the Wetlands Reserve Program. According to Ambs, the changes, which are related to the valuation of wetlands, have limited the appeal of the program. Mike Sullivan commented that the lower basin states have the same concern because their participation in WRP has also dropped.

Holly Stoerker said that UMRBA staff will prepare drafts of the testimony for each of the five agency budgets. She suggested that the testimony on the EPA budget be given to the Water Quality Executive Committee, as well as the UMRBA Board, for review. She cautioned that the review time may be short, given the due dates that the Congressional appropriations subcommittees have set for outside testimony.

Missouri River Operating Plan

Mike Wells said that a new Master Operating Manual was approved for the Missouri River in March 2004, after 15 years of study and debate. Operation during drought is one of the most controversial issues. Wells explained that under the new manual, more water will be stored in upstream reservoirs, resulting in shorter navigation seasons and a new trigger for determining the close of navigation. Wells also commented that the effect of these changes on the Mississippi River has been downplayed.

Dave Busse of the St. Louis District Corps of Engineers gave an overview presentation on Missouri River Operations and the impact on the Middle Mississippi River in particular. He noted that the Middle Mississippi is a critical area in the inland navigation system, between the pooled upper reaches and the confluence with the Ohio River, where additional flows come into the system. Busse explained that Missouri River flows and reservoirs are currently at their lowest level since 1967. It will take 6 years of median flow or a flood of the magnitude of the 1993 flood to replenish the reservoirs.

Historically, the beginning and ending dates of navigation support at the mouth of the Missouri River have been 1 April and 1 December. However, in 2004, 2005, and 2006, the navigation season was reduced by between 44 and 48 days. In 2007, it may be reduced by as much as 61 days. That decision will be made on July 1, 2007, based on system storage. Busse reported that, in 2008, there may be no navigation season at all. That decision will be made on March 15, 2008. Busse explained that low flows decrease efficiency because industry must light load and 2-way traffic is limited given the

difficulty of navigation bends. Low water also requires more dredging. He noted that the Corps tries not to schedule dredging prior to July 1, due to pallid sturgeon.

Water Quality Update

Organizational Options Report and Outreach — Holly Stoerker reported that following the discussion of the “Organizational Options” report at the UMRBA’s November 2006 meeting, the report was revised and approved for distribution. The report, which recommends that UMRBA enhance its role in interstate water quality activities, has been widely distributed, including to the National Research Council panel that is evaluating many of the same organizational issues. Stoerker thanked the McKnight Foundation for its support for the project.

Chuck Corell reported that the Water Quality Executive Committee (WQEC) has been developing a work plan that focuses on a variety of issues, including designated uses, fish consumption advisories, and sediment criteria. In addition, the WQEC is devoting effort to outreach strategies and funding issues. With regard to designated uses, Corell explained that water quality standards are actually a combination of designated uses, water quality criteria, and antidegradation policy. The question that the WQEC and Water Quality Task Force (WQTF) are addressing is whether there should be a unique set of designated uses for the Mississippi River. How this question is resolved will likely set the basis for much of the groups’ future work.

Corell also explained that the WQEC has developed a one-page proposal outlining the need for \$200,000 annually from EPA to support UMRBA’s water quality work. Corell noted that the proposal is based on the premise that funding for UMRBA should grow to be equivalent with the federal investment in water quality programs for other interstate waterbodies.

Corell also reviewed the elements of the strategy that accompanies the proposal. He said that short term goals include securing funds from EPA and developing a ramp-up strategy for UMRBA. Outreach activities will include promoting the proposal with EPA leadership, consulting with the States’ Washington offices, and seeking champions in Congress. Future considerations and strategies may include a joint Governors’ statement and a legislative proposal to authorize funding for a UMR program.

Dru Buntin emphasized that funding to support UMRBA’s work should not come at the expense of other funding streams. Corell concurred, noting that the WQEC had specifically discussed the fact that funds for UMRBA should not come from the States’ Section 106 grants. He also noted that the States currently spend a total of approximately \$700,000 on Mississippi River water quality management efforts.

Todd Ambs said that the proposal should be discussed with the Governors’ offices soon. He also noted that the UMRBA Board needs to be comfortable with the fiduciary responsibilities implied by this proposal.

Gary Clark moved and Todd Ambs seconded a motion to approve the proposal developed by the WQEC. The motion passed unanimously.

Sediment-Related Water Quality Criteria — Dave Hokanson presented an overview of the WQTF’s final report on sediment-related water quality criteria. He said that sediment is viewed by many as the key water quality problem on the UMR; yet that is not generally reflected in the States’ impairment listings under the Clean Water Act. In addition, inconsistencies exist in those reaches which are listed for sediment. UMRBA’s sediment criteria project was designed to summarize the state of the knowledge on sediment impacts and generate ideas about what might be done to bring greater

consistency in the approaches used under the Clean Water Act. Hokanson described the consensus statements that resulted from the project:

- We need to protect the UMR and maintain designated uses.
- Despite reductions in loading, sediment remains an issue, equilibrium has not been reached, and there is net deposition in some areas.
- Significant longitudinal variations in sediment characteristics and transport exist.
- There are negative impacts on aquatic life in some areas of the UMR and some impairment of the aquatic life designated use.
- Protecting the aquatic life use can help protect other uses.

Hokanson also outlined the conclusions and recommendations from the report, including:

- Develop a guidance document that focuses initially on criteria for suspended sediment, numeric translators for existing narrative criteria, incorporating SAV protection criteria proposed by UMRCC for Pools 3 to Pool 13, and chronic conditions.
- Investigate sedimentation (bedded sediments) further through the development of a white paper, including discussion of the “pollution” categorization.
- Develop a research needs list to help guide further investigations regarding sediment-related water quality problems on the UMR.

Todd Ambs encouraged broad distribution of the report. Hokanson explained that the report was designed to be a report from the WQTF to the WQEC and UMRBA Board. Therefore, before it is more broadly distributed, some expression of support is needed from those groups.

Administrative Matters—Holly Stoerker reported that EPA Region 7 has appointed Art Spratlin, Director of the Water Division, to the WQEC. Region 5 has appointed its Deputy Water Division Director, Tim Henry.

Stoerker distributed copies of a draft Travel Reimbursement Policy for the WQEC and WQTF. She explained that it is modeled after the policy adopted in 2004 for UMRBA generally. The policy allows for reimbursement of travel costs associated with meetings of the WQEC and WQTF, for members who have paid the \$17,000 water quality assessment in the current or preceding year.

Dru Buntin requested that UMRBA staff prepare estimates of the cost of the policy. Chuck Corell commented that WQEC members would likely not utilize the reimbursement much, but it may be helpful to some states in securing approval for out-of-state travel.

Martin Konrad moved and Todd Ambs seconded a motion to approve the Water Quality Travel Reimbursement Policy. The motion passed unanimously.

Holly Stoerker informed the Board that the WQTF has selected a new Chair. Jim Baumann of Wisconsin DNR will be replacing Marvin Hora of Minnesota PCA, as Task Force Chair. Stoerker suggested that Hora be given a certificate of appreciation signed by the UMRBA Chair.

Conflict of Interest Policy

Dru Buntin explained that the IRS is increasingly interested in having nonprofit organizations establish policies regarding conflict of interest. Therefore UMRBA staff has drafted a policy that would require

Board members to make disclosures before proceeding with decisions and to sign disclosure statements annually.

Todd Ambs moved and Gary Clark seconded a motion to approve the Conflict of Interest policy as drafted by UMRBA staff. The motion passed unanimously.

Investment Policy

Holly Stoerker said that UMRBA's independent auditors had suggested that UMRBA's investment policy from 1981 be updated. Therefore staff has drafted a new policy that sets forth investment objectives, provides guidelines and limitations on the types of investments UMRBA uses, and describes the responsibilities of the Board and Executive Director. Stoerker noted that, based on discussions at the Board's breakfast meeting, the final sentence of the draft policy dated 2/8/07 should be changed to read "Deviations from the policy must be approved by the UMRBA Board." Gary Clark moved and Martin Konrad seconded a motion to approve the 2/8/07 draft Investment Policy with the amendment described by Stoerker. The motion passed unanimously.

Authorized Signatures

Holly Stoerker said that the UMRBA Bylaws require checks over \$6000 to be signed by a Board member, in addition to the Executive Director. Gary Clark moved and Todd Ambs seconded a motion designating Laurie Martinson as the second signatory. The motion passed unanimously.

Future Meetings

Holly Stoerker said the schedule for the May 2007 quarterly meetings in the Quad Cities will involve the following sequence of meetings:

- May 22 — UMRBA
- May 23 — EMP-CC (a.m.) and Adaptive Management Workshop (p.m.)
- May 24 — Adaptive Management Workshop (a.m.) and NECC/ECC (late a.m. and p.m.)

The dates and locations for other future meetings include:

- August 21-23, 2007 in La Crosse, Wisconsin
- November 13-15, 2007 in St. Paul, Minnesota [Note: will likely be extended to November 16, to accommodate a water quality/ecosystem restoration workshop.]

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:25 pm.