

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

**May 18, 2011
Quarterly Meeting**

**Holiday Inn
Rock Island, Illinois**

Kevin Foerster of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service called the meeting to order at 12:42 p.m. on May 18, 2011. Other EMP-CC representatives present were Charles Barton (USACE), Mike Jawson (USGS), Rick Mollahan (IL DNR), Pat Boddy (IA DNR), Walt Popp (MN DNR) attended on behalf of Tim Schlagenhaft, Janet Sternburg (MO DoC), Jim Fischer (WI DNR), and Bill Franz (US EPA). A complete list of attendees follows these minutes.

USACE Project Development Process

Marv Hubbell overviewed USACE's project planning and construction process, including the various required planning steps and levels of review. In response to requests from Rick Mollahan and Kevin Foerster, Hubbell said he will distribute the Corps' project development diagram to EMP's distribution list.

Minutes of the February 16, 2011 Meeting

Jim Fischer moved and Rick Mollahan seconded a motion to approve the draft minutes of the February 16, 2011 meeting as written. The motion carried unanimously.

Program Management

FY 11 Fiscal Update

Marv Hubbell reported that the FY 11 Full-Year Continuing Appropriation Act was enacted on April 15, 2011. USACE has recently determined allocations to specific projects and programs from within its overall funding under the measure, and EMP will receive \$21.15 million for the year. Prior to April 15, EMP had been executing based on a \$19 million budget for FY 11, under previous continuing resolution authorities (CRAs). However, Hubbell said EMP is in a good position to fully execute \$21.15 million. He stressed the importance for USACE programs and projects to fully execute their allocations, explaining that falling short will likely have implications on out-year funding. Hubbell observed that USACE's FY 11 allocation decisions were tied very closely to the President's original FY 11 budget request. He outlined EMP allocations under the \$21.15 million budget, as follows:

- Regional Administration — \$868,000
- LTRMP — \$6,400,000
- HREPs — \$13,882,000
 - Program Model Certification and Regional HREP Support — \$250,000
 - MVP — \$4,100,000
 - MVR — \$5,432,000
 - MVS — \$4,100,000

Hubbell explained that EMP's LTRMP priorities for FY 11 include base monitoring, accuracy assessment of the 2010-2011 land cover/land use dataset, and systemic LiDAR and bathymetric data collection and serving. On the HREP side of the program, EMP will continue work on 24 habitat projects, with eight projects in construction and 16 in planning. Two new habitat projects will also be initiated in FY 11.

In response to a question from Janet Sternburg, Hubbell and Karen Hagerty said USACE has not yet determined how the additional funds above the initial CRA funding level will be spent. However, they confirmed that the FY 10-14 LTRMP Strategic Plan will guide the additional LTRMP allocation.

FY 12 Budget Request

Hubbell said the President's FY 12 budget request includes \$18.15 million for EMP. He reiterated the importance for USACE programs and projects to be included in the President's budget requests, especially in the current federal fiscal climate.

2010 Report to Congress

Hubbell said USACE Headquarters (HQ) is currently reviewing EMP's 2010 Report to Congress (RTC). Hard copies and CDs of the report will be distributed soon. Hubbell said Corps staff also plan to distribute a brochure summarizing the RTC's major highlights and recommendations this summer. In response to a question from Jim Fischer, Hubbell said the brochure will not undergo HQ review.

EMP's 25th Anniversary and 100,000 Acres Restored Celebration

Hubbell announced that Corps staff are planning a celebration of EMP's 25th anniversary and its restoration of 100,000 acres of aquatic habitat. The event will be held this fall. In response to a question from Kevin Foerster, Hubbell said details concerning the event remain to be determined. However, the celebration will likely include a site visit to an HREP. He said ASA(CW) Jo-Ellen Darcy will be invited to attend.

EMP's Regional Review Plan

Hubbell reported that Corps staff are finalizing a draft EMP Regional Review Plan for MVD review. Following any revisions, MVD will transmit the Plan to HQ for consideration. Hubbell said the Plan identifies ways to guide and streamline HREP reviews, in compliance with the Corps' January 2010 project review engineering circular (EC 1165-2-209).

Program Identification

Hubbell emphasized the importance of identifying EMP as a program in connection with specific HREP and LTRMP activities. Communicating EMP's accomplishments to its various audiences builds and maintains support for the program. Hubbell asked that partners send him any ideas for enhancing EMP's visibility both generally and in the context of specific projects and activities.

Jim Fischer suggested that 1) public access points in LTRMP trend pools have signs that describe EMP's monitoring activities within that pool and 2) public relations brochures be made available at boat landings to describe EMP's local monitoring and restoration efforts and provide contact information for further inquiries. Karen Hagerty noted that EMP's 20th anniversary brochure could be updated and used for general outreach purposes, including distribution at boat landings. Hubbell said EMP's 20th anniversary postcards could also be updated and used as outreach materials. In response to a suggestion from Barry Johnson, Hagerty said Corps staff are currently drafting language that partners can use for crediting EMP in the program's publications and presentations.

Increased Efficiency and Transparency of the FY 10-14 LTRMP Strategic Plan

Hubbell explained that increased efficiency in LTRMP's base monitoring efforts over time is providing more opportunities for data analyses, coordination with other research and management efforts, and HREP-LTRMP integration. Currently, priorities for how to allocate capacity stemming from these efficiencies are determined within UMESC and individual field stations. The work is not being captured in LTRMP's scopes of work (SOWs) or other reporting mechanisms, and partners are not considering priorities for this capacity as a group. Hubbell stressed the importance of 1) recording and communicating to stakeholders the additional work being done under EMP, as well as partner contributions, and 2) ensuring that the additional resources are used effectively and efficiently. He said the additional work being done should directly support EMP's authority and partners' goals and objectives for LTRMP, as articulated in the FY 10-14 LTRMP Strategic and Operational Plan. Hubbell said USACE, USGS, and the field stations will coordinate in identifying and prioritizing these additional opportunities.

Beginning with FY 12 planning, Hubbell said USACE and USGS will work with field station staff and component specialists to 1) examine the actual time required to collect and serve the base monitoring component data and 2) establish a coordinated process for developing and evaluating LTRMP's annual SOWs. Hubbell encouraged partners to send him suggestions for improving the focus and communication of LTRMP activities.

In response to a question from Janet Sternburg, Hubbell said USACE and USGS staff typically begin developing LTRMP's annual SOWs in August or September prior to the fiscal year start in October. Sternburg observed that the relationship among LTRMP's annual SOWs, research frameworks, and Science Plan is unclear. Mike Jawson said USGS staff are currently developing the research frameworks and Science Plan, and hope to get a draft Science Plan to partners for review this summer. Hagerty said LTRMP staff anticipate that draft research frameworks for the aquatic vegetation and landscape components will be completed this year.

Hubbell said, while there is still uncertainty regarding how to develop and implement more focused annual LTRMP SOWs, drivers for enhancing the focus of the SOWs include 1) capturing the efficiency and effectiveness of the highly skilled LTRMP workforce, 2) rekindling program identity, and 3) providing more effective direction to field station, USGS, and USACE staff.

Sternburg suggested that state managers who supervise the field station team leaders should be invited to participate when USACE and USGS meet with each field station. She explained that this helps build a better understanding of EMP and the partnership within state agencies. Bernie Schonhoff encouraged broad participation in the next field station meeting, stressing the importance of this opportunity to discuss LTRMP issues and priorities. Hubbell said the next field station meetings will likely occur this fall. He noted the value in having all partners attend the meeting to enhance program integration. Bill Franz suggested that the UMRBA Water Quality Task Force members be invited to provide insights regarding water quality efforts on the UMR.

Walt Popp asked Hubbell whether the concern is with productivity or with products that do not meet programmatic needs. Hubbell said he does not have a blanket answer for Popp's question. He stressed that the width and breadth of field station activities are not being documented and shared with partners. As a result, there are instances of project proposals being developed in isolation and products not being properly shared and credited. He said EMP needs to be accountable and transparent with how it expends LTRMP funding. Jawson added that EMP often collaborates on important research publications, and should be credited for its contributions.

Public Involvement and Outreach

Hubbell said EMP has an opportunity to have Tom Mangelsen, a well-known professional nature photographer, take photographs of the UMR. EMP would only need to pay for Mangelsen's travel expenses on the river. Hubbell said UMESC's new LTRMP website is up and running, and USACE staff continue to work on revamping the HREP webpages.

Jawson said Congressman Ron Kind (WI-D) is interested in participating in a public event to celebrate the opening of UMESC's new wing. Jawson said DOI Secretary Ken Salazar will be invited to attend the event.

Implementation Issues Assessment

NGOs as Cost Share Sponsors

Marshall Plumley overviewed WRDA 2007 and the Corps policy related to NGOs' ability to serve as non-federal sponsors for HREPs. He explained that WRDA 2007 Section 2003 amended the 1970 Flood Control Act, redefining non-federal interests to include nonprofit entities with the consent of the affected local government. A qualifying nonprofit must have full authority and capability to perform the terms of its agreement and to pay damages, if necessary, in the event of failure to perform. Plumley said NGOs are subject to the same requirements as public entities, including the following:

1. Provide the required cost share (i.e., 35 percent for restoration), with all funds coming from non-federal sources; cost-share extends to historic preservation mitigation
2. Provide all lands, easements, and rights-of-way, relocation of utilities and other existing structures, and disposal of dredged or excavated material (LERRDs)
3. Land and project may not be part of a wetland bank or mitigation for another project
4. Operate, maintain, repair, replace, and rehabilitate the project, or functional portion of the project, using non-federal funds, throughout its 50-year life span
5. Maintain the federal government's right to enter the property
6. Hold and save the federal government free from all damages
7. Assume all responsibility for hazardous, toxic, and radioactive waste (HTRW) clean up and liability
8. Prevent any obstructions or encroachments to the project
9. Comply with USACE's bookkeeping standards, the project partnership agreement (PPA), and all applicable Federal and state laws and regulations

Barb Naramore recalled that, at a past EMP-CC quarterly meeting, Tim Schlagenhaft requested that the issue paper authors consult with NGOs in developing the NGOs as Cost Share Sponsors issue paper. In response to Naramore's reminder, Hubbell confirmed that the authors will consult with NGOs regarding the project types and locations that might be of interest and their perspectives on serving as HREP sponsors. Meeting participants suggested that the authors consult The Nature Conservancy, Audubon, and American Land Conservancy, as well as levee districts.

In response to a question from Pat Boddy, Plumley said that, if HTRW is discovered during the project's implementation, the NGO sponsor will need to either remove the contaminant or halt the project.

May 19 Authors' Forum

Hubbell said an Implementation Issues Assessment (IIA) authors' forum will be held on May 19, 2011. The forum will give issue paper authors and EMP partners an opportunity to informally discuss the IIA issues and schedule.

IIA Issue Statements

Hubbell explained that, at its February 16, 2011 quarterly meeting, the EMP-CC adopted issue statements for each implementation issue. However, meeting participants also offered some modifications to certain issue statements. Following the February 16 meeting, Hubbell said he worked with UMRBA staff to revise the issue statements based on the meeting's discussion. Changes to the issue statements are shown in Track Changes on pages A3-A9 of the meeting packet. Jim Fischer moved and Boddy seconded a motion to approve the revisions as shown in the packet. The motion was carried unanimously.

Long Term Resource Monitoring Program

Product Highlights

Mike Jawson reported that LTRMP has completed two manuscripts: 1) Evaluation of Single- and Two-Stage Adaptive Sampling Designs for Estimation of Density and Abundance of Freshwater Mussels in a Large River and 2) Seasonal Zooplankton Dynamics in Main Channel and Backwater Habitats of the UMR. Walt Popp explained that the research described in the second manuscript was designed to document the zooplankton community baseline prior to the arrival of Asian carp, and also examined community differences above and below Lake Pepin.

Jawson said Nate De Jager presented at the 2011 U.S. International Association for Landscape Ecology Symposium on 1) the effects of flood duration on vegetation and soils on the UMR floodplain and 2) spatial clusters of total nitrogen. He said UMESC staff continue to work with Chinese scientists on monitoring the Yangtze River. Jawson recognized that, while EMP does not fund this international work, the program's existence makes this important collaboration possible. He said UMESC staff will also work with large river scientists in Pennsylvania this summer. Janet Sternburg recognized this value in exchanging information with other large river systems, but asked how EMP-related work is handled when the component specialists are on extended travel. Jawson said there is adequate backup within UMESC staff to cover staff on travel.

Jawson reported that UMESC has revamped the LTRMP website: <http://www.umesc.usgs.gov/ltrmp.html>. He asked partners to contact UMESC staff if they encounter errors or have ideas for improving the website.

Jawson reported that Representative Betty McCollum (MN-D) is drafting legislation that would promote coordination on ecosystem-based management at the federal level for the UMR. Jawson also reported that he met with Congressional Research Service (CRS) staff who are examining major environmental programs, including EMP. The study is not intended as a hierarchical evaluation of the programs, but rather is seeking to identify common elements of success. Among other things, Jawson said the CRS staff asked his opinion of whether highly prescriptive authorizing legislation is preferable to more flexible language.

USACE LTRMP Report

Karen Hagerty said LiDAR data in Pools 15 to 19 will be collected this fall, contingent on favorable water levels and weather conditions. Hagerty reported that systemic bathymetric data have undergone QA/QC and are accessible on LTRMP's website (<http://www.umesc.usgs.gov/aquatic/bathymetry.html>) and by contacting Jim Rogala.

A-Team Report

Kirk Hansen reported that the A-Team met on April 27, 2011 to discuss the draft report assessing the indicators used in the 2008 Status and Trends Report and the LTRMP research frameworks. Hansen said the meeting also included five presentations on various LTRMP research efforts. He said the 2010 field station products list is nearing completion.

LTRMP Product Highlight: Modeling Big River Dynamics

Barry Johnson described the development and potential applications of two-dimensional pool-scale hydrodynamic models of ecological and hydraulic processes. He said the hydrodynamic models simulate water movement within the floodplain as discharge changes and determine the distribution and abundance of habitat features. These models can be used to plan and evaluate restoration efforts.

Johnson said the Pool 8 Hydrodynamic Model was designed to 1) develop a two-dimensional pool-scale model of flow in the channels and floodplain, 2) simulate a range of flow conditions and resulting habitat features, 3) relate habitat information to biota and water chemistry, and 4) use model output to inform an ecological response model. Specifically, the modeling was aimed to answer how the dynamics of flow, physical factors, and habitat features over space and time affect ecology.

Johnson also provided an example of model output for Pool 5, where the model provided useful insights regarding phytoplankton and macrophyte distributions. Johnson explained that the models can inform a range of restoration work on the UMR, including designing islands and drawdowns; modifying flow distributions; estimating future changes in discharge dynamics; and comparing habitats, biota, and management actions within and between pools and reaches. Johnson said future model development will focus on adding wind fetch, aquatic vegetation as a hydraulic component and nutrient processor, and a transition of land cover types. Work will continue on incorporating the University of Illinois' ecological model and creating a manager-level version of the model.

Joint Venture Research

Barb Pardo joined by teleconference to overview the USFWS's Upper Mississippi River and Great Lakes Region Joint Venture (JV) effort and how it can help inform HREP selection and design. Pardo explained that JV is a regional-scale bird conservation effort that involves government agencies, corporations, tribes, individuals, and NGOs. While JV was originally formed to implement the North American Waterfowl Management Plan, it has recently broadened its focus to include all bird conservation partnerships.

Pardo explained that, in 2007, the UMR and Great Lakes Region's JV team used national bird conservation plans to develop conservation strategies for each major bird group in the region, outlining their specific population and habitat objectives. For example, from the Partners In Flight North American Landbird Conservation Plan, the JV team created the UMR and Great Lakes Region JV Landbird Habitat Conservation Strategy. The JV team then combined these strategies to create the 2007 UMR and Great Lakes Region Implementation Plan, which defines population and habitat objectives for all bird groups.

Pardo described JV's research priorities, including refining breeding habitat models, conducting behavioral research, and evaluating non-breeding habitat. She said JV's monitoring priorities are to determine the status and trends of bird populations and any causes of population changes, evaluate conservation efforts, and inform conservation design. Pardo explained that the JV has a flex fund to implement priority conservation projects. To target habitat areas for restoring priority species, JV uses GIS to identify the presence of a JV focal bird species, the habitat requirements for those species, and

how much of each habitat type is needed in certain areas to meet population objectives. Pardo said the JV's bird strategies are available at: <http://www.uppermissgreatlakesjv.org/>.

In response to a question from Marv Hubbell, Pardo said the JV information can be used to determine bird species and habitat conservation priorities along the Upper Mississippi and Illinois Rivers. In response to a question from Karen Hagerty, Pardo explained that JV does examine the minimum patch size requirements and micro-habitat needs for all focal species. She said the information is provided in the individual conservation strategies for each major bird group.

Mike Jawson noted that USGS serves on the UMR and Great Lakes Region's JV management and science teams. He said JV's conservation strategies and restoration tools are well-tested and have proven very effective.

Habitat Rehabilitation and Enhancement Projects

District Reports

Brian Markert reported that high water is delaying construction again this year in MVS, with work currently suspended on Batchtown, Swan Lake, and Calhoun Point. However, MVS still plans to complete construction on Calhoun Point this fiscal year. Markert noted that the project is the District's FY 11 National High Performing Project. He reported that MVD is currently reviewing a final draft DPR for Ted Shanks, and the District hopes to award a contract for the project's construction this fiscal year. Markert overviewed MVS's FY 11 planning priorities, including Rip Rap Landing, Clarence Cannon, and Eagles Nest and Piasa Island. In response to a question from Janet Sternburg, Markert explained that planning for Clarence Cannon is to allow management in larger units, introducing water supply in the upper portions of the project area, and setting the levee back to restore bottomland hardwoods. Kevin Foerster expressed USFWS's support for appropriate levee setbacks.

Jeff DeZellar said MVP plans to finalize design on Capoli Slough and award a construction contract for the project in FY 11. DeZellar said MVP will increase its planning efforts on Harper's Slough once planning is completed for Capoli Slough. He anticipates the District will complete a draft DPR for Harper's Slough in FY 11. DeZellar reported that L&D 3 fish passage is undergoing agency technical review (ATR). The District plans to submit a draft DPR for the project to MVD in late July. He said a funding mechanism to construct L&D 3 fish passage has not yet been identified. MVP plans to complete the major construction elements on Pool 8 Islands Phase III this fiscal year. DeZellar said the District anticipates distributing four draft project evaluation reports this summer and is working on three more evaluation reports. Hubbell noted that MVP's USACE FY 11 national high priority project is Pool 8 Islands.

Jim Fischer, while acknowledging the difficult obstacles associated with L&D 3 fish passage, expressed his disappointment with the project's schedule. He recalled that Corps staff had said a draft DPR would be completed in March 2011. DeZellar acknowledged Fischer's concerns, but said the implementation guidance for the WRDA 07 project review requirements was not available until January 2010, after the PMP for L&D 3 fish passage was complete. This has created significant delays, since MVP had to revise the PMP to include plans for an IEPR.

Marv Hubbell reported that high water levels have delayed construction on Lake Odessa and Fox Island. He said MVR still plans to complete construction on Lake Odessa and initiate construction on Fox Island this fiscal year. Hubbell introduced Cathy Henry of the USFWS. Henry said partners' efforts to complete Lake Odessa construction are going very well, even with the impacts from this year's high water. She said Lake Odessa will be a great addition to the Refuge. Hubbell said MVR anticipates awarding a construction contract for Rice Lake in FY 11. Rice Lake's award this fiscal year is extremely important to EMP's ability to fully execute its FY 11 appropriation. He said the District's FY 11 planning priorities include Pool 12 Overwintering, Huron Island, and Beaver Island.

HREP Highlight: Huron Island

Nate Richards described how LTRMP data is being used in planning Huron Island and other Pool 18 projects. Huron Island's project delivery team (PDT) explored LTRMP's database for information it could use in project planning, NEPA compliance, and establishing a baseline for project evaluation. Richards said the PDT primarily used LTRMP's long term resource monitoring data related to fish, water quality, hydrology, and physical characteristics in Pools 13 and 26 to make assumptions of the habitat characteristics in Pool 18. The team used this information to develop hypotheses related to habitat availability, develop the project's restoration objectives, and to design pre- and post-project fish monitoring. Richards said analysis of Pools 13 and 26 LTRMP trend information can also be used in future Pool 18 restoration efforts, including Keithsburg and Boston Bay projects. The comparisons between Pool 18 sampling and the data for Pools 13 and 26 should provide insights regarding the relationships among the three pools.

In response to a question from Bernie Schonhoff, Barry Johnson said the hydrodynamic models could also be used in planning and evaluating projects such as Huron Island. However, Johnson said the approach that Richards' outlined should be effective and suggested that the Huron Island PDT document its approach and results. Karen Hagerty said Illinois' long term electrofishing data in Pools 16 and 19 could also be a good resource for Huron Island.

HREP-LTRMP Integration

Marv Hubbell recalled that the EMP-CC agreed to explore the question of better integrating the HREP and LTRMP components to enhance their overall effectiveness. He suggested that EMP partners take a three-pronged approach, as follows:

- All EMP partners actively seek integration opportunities
- USACE requires the use of LTRMP data to help identify baseline conditions in DPRs
- Partners adopt component monitoring protocols for use in project monitoring, where appropriate, including development and support of data storage and retrieval

Fischer expressed his support for proceeding with Hubbell's approach.

Other Business

The upcoming quarterly meetings are as follows:

- **August 2011 — Davenport**
 - UMRBA — August 16
 - EMP-CC — August 17 (a.m.)
 - Adaptive Management Workshop — August 17 (p.m.)-August 18 (a.m.) (tentative)
- **November 2011 — Moline**
 - UMRBA — November 15
 - EMP-CC — November 16 (a.m.)
 - Possible IIA meeting — November 16 (p.m.)
- **February 2012 — Quad Cities**
 - UMRBA — February 28
 - EMP-CC — February 29 (a.m.)
 - Possible IIA meeting — February 29 (p.m.)

The August 2011 NECC meeting is canceled due to lack of funding. Any future NECC and joint EMP-CC/NECC meetings will be contingent on NESP funding. If NESP receives FY 12 funding, the schedule above will likely be revised to permit EMP-CC, NECC, and any joint sessions to be held on the same day (i.e., November 16, 2011 and February 29, 2012). This would push the possible IIA meetings to the following day.

Kevin Foerster and Charles Barton recognized Bill Franz's many contributions to EMP and the UMR.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

**EMP-CC Attendance List
May 18, 2011**

EMP-CC Members

Charles Barton	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVD
Kevin Foerster	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, UMR Refuges
Mike Jawson	U.S. Geological Survey, UMESC
Rick Mollahan	Illinois Department of Natural Resources
Pat Boddy	Iowa Department of Natural Resources
Walt Popp	Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
Janet Sternburg	Missouri Department of Conservation
Jim Fischer	Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
Bill Franz	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 5

Others In Attendance

Jeff DeZellar	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVP
Marvin Hubbell	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVR
Karen Hagerty	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVR
Darron Niles	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVR
Marshall Plumley	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVR
Brian Markert	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVS
Donovan Henry	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVS
Bob Clevestine	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, UMR Refuges
Jon Duyvejonck	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, RIFO
Amber Andress	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, RIFO
Cathy Henry	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, UMR Refuges
Barb Pardo	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 3 (via phone)
Barry Johnson	U.S. Geological Survey, UMESC
Steve Shults	Illinois Department of Natural Resources
Olivia Dorothy	Illinois Lieutenant Governor's Office
Bernie Schonhoff	Iowa Department of Natural Resources
Kirk Hansen	Iowa Department of Natural Resources
Robert Stout	Missouri Department of Natural Resources
Steve Sletten	Atkins
Brad Walker	Izaak Walton League
Tom Boland	MACTEC
Cecily Smith	Prairie Rivers Network
Don Powell	SEH Inc.
Barb Naramore	Upper Mississippi River Basin Association
Dave Hokanson	Upper Mississippi River Basin Association
Kirsten Mickelsen	Upper Mississippi River Basin Association