

**Minutes of the 154th Quarterly Meeting
of the
Upper Mississippi River Basin Association**

**May 19, 2020
Web-Based Conference Meeting**

Steve Galarneau called the meeting to order at 9:00 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
Sam Hiscocks	Iowa Department of Transportation
Barb Naramore	Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
Dru Buntin	Missouri Department of Natural Resource
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
Verlon Barnes	U.S. Department of Agriculture, NRCS (on behalf of Sal Salinas)
Ken Westlake	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 5
Sabrina Chandler	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, UMR Refuges
Sandra Morrison	U.S. Geological Survey, Midwest Region (on behalf of Scott Morlock)

Others in Attendance:

Kirk Hansen	Iowa Department of Natural Resources
Megan Moore	Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
Patrick Phenow	Minnesota Department of Transportation
Ken Henderson	Missouri Department of Agriculture
Chris Wieberg	Missouri Department of Natural Resources
Mike Halsted	Wisconsin Department of Transportation
Sara Walling	Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection
Jessica Brooks	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, NWS
Molly Woloszyn	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, NIDIS
Thatch Shepard	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVD
Patrick Chambers	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVD
Jim Cole	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVD
Ben Emery	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVD
Cody Eckhardt	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVD
Col. Karl Jansen	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVP
Kevin Wilson	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVP

Chris Erickson	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVP
Terry Birkenstock	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVP
Angela Deen	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVP
Jon Hendrickson	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVP
Clayton Tallman	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVP
Steve Tapp	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVP
Col. Steve Sattinger	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVR
Kim Thomas	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVR
Andy Barnes	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVR
Jodi Creswell	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVR
Mari Fournier	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
John Menard	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVR
Roger Perk	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVR
Marshall Plumley	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVR
Nate Richards	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVR
Paul St. Louis	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVR
Scott Whitney	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVR
Col. Brian Sizemore	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVS
Jasen Brown	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVS
Hal Graef	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVS
Greg Kohler	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVS
Brian Johnson	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVS
Kat McCain	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVS
Monique Savage	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVS
Rachel Steiger	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVS
Shawn Sullivan	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVS
Matt Vielhaber	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVS
Chuck Theiling	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, ERDC
Joe Summerlin	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 5
Jason Daniels	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 7
Amy Shields	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 7
Tim Yager	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, UMR Refuges
Matt Mangan	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, UMR Refuges
Neal Jackson	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, UMRCC
Greg Conover	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Illinois-Iowa Field Office
Kraig McPeck	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Illinois-Iowa Field Office
Sara Schmuecker	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Illinois-Iowa Field Office
Tyler Porter	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Illinois-Iowa Field Office
Mark Gaikowski	U.S. Geological Survey, UMESC
Jennifer Dieck	U.S. Geological Survey, UMESC
Jeff Houser	U.S. Geological Survey, UMESC
Jennie Sauer	U.S. Geological Survey, UMESC
Jon Omgig	AMEC Earth and Environmental
Olivia Dorothy	American Rivers
Rick Stoff	Our Mississippi
Gretchen Benjamin	The Nature Conservancy
Doug Blodgett	The Nature Conservancy
Mike Klingner	Upper Mississippi, Illinois, and Missouri Rivers Association
Paul Rohde	Waterways Council
Tom Boland	Wood Environment and Infrastructure Solutions

Angela Love	Wood Environment and Infrastructure Solutions
Mark Ellis	Upper Mississippi River Basin Association
Lauren Salvato	Upper Mississippi River Basin Association
Andrew Stephenson	Upper Mississippi River Basin Association
Kirsten Wallace	Upper Mississippi River Basin Association

Minutes

Tim Hall moved and Dru Buntin seconded a motion to approve the draft minutes of the February 25, 2020 UMRBA quarterly meeting as written. The motion was approved unanimously.

Executive Director's Report

Kirsten Wallace reported that UMRBA staff are working remotely for the foreseeable future. Staff can still be reached via the office phone number in addition to direct phone lines and emails. Wallace expressed gratitude to UMRBA staff for their continued dedication to the Association during the rise of the coronavirus pandemic. In addition, Wallace thanks the UMRBA Board and partners for their flexibility and patience as staff shifted to remote work as well as accommodating staff who have also had children at home.

In addition to the written Executive Director's report included in the agenda packet, Wallace elaborated on the following items:

- In lieu of institutional arrangements, UMRBA is convening NESP implementing partners on weekly conference calls to discuss the program's implementation strategy in FY 2020 in preparation for a potential construction new start in FY 2021 as well as a handful of policy issues. Wallace recognized District staff for their hard work in turning the \$1.5 million allocation into a handful of construction-ready ecosystem restoration projects in just about six months.
- The UMRR Coordinating Committee is reviewing UMRR's 2015-2025 Strategic Plan. Given the plan is at its half-way life span, the Committee is reflecting on the past five years and charting a course for the next five years. The partnership's accomplishments since 2015 have been tremendous. This includes efficiently constructing important habitat restoration projects, continuing long term monitoring, and achieving scientific insights. The program has continued to foster integration of its habitat restoration and science work.
- The Water Level Management Regional Coordinating Committee continues to make significant progress. The Committee's current focus is in updating regional priorities for water level management with current estimates on costs and benefits as well as understandings of feasibility. In addition to work through the PAS agreement, the Corps is applying for Sustainable Rivers Program funding to estimate acres exposed associated with various drawdown depths and Missouri DoC provided its \$5,000 cost share to UMRBA to use the Corps' dabbling duck habitat suitability model to estimate benefits.

Because of coronavirus travel and workplace restrictions, Wallace explained that the UMRBA Interstate WQ Monitoring Strategy pilot project in CWA Reaches 8-9 (i.e., from the Iowa River confluence to L&D 22) is postponed until October 1, 2020. It is anticipated that new protocols for monitoring, travel, and laboratories will be in place by then to allow for the project to resume.

Given major changes in UMRBA's travel and work activities as described above, Wallace presented a new FY 2020 budget for the Board's consideration. Wallace also outlined major assumptions included in the draft FY 2021 budget for the Board's consideration which anticipates reduced expenses related to in-person meetings and travel. Wallace noted that this year will include a biennial audit. Both draft

budgets were sent electronically to the Board in advance of today's meeting and discussed on an earlier conference call. Dru Buntin moved and Tim Hall seconded a motion to approve the FY 2020 and FY 2021 budgets as provided. The motion was approved unanimously.

Wallace pointed to UMRBA's financial statements on pages B-7 to B-10 of the agenda packet. Dru Buntin 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.

Coronavirus-Related Impacts to the Upper Mississippi River System

Stephen Galarneau noted that some states and federal agencies provided written summaries of coronavirus-related implications to the Upper Mississippi River System that are available on pages C-1 to C-3 of the agenda packet. Galarneau said the Board has had an initial discussion about how the coronavirus might impact budgets for the individual states and the Association as well as how UMRBA might be helpful to the states during the pandemic. Galarneau assured that the states remain committed to UMRBA, taking their membership to the Association seriously. Board members will continue to be active participants to the extent practicable. The Upper Mississippi River is an incredibly valued resource and will play a role in helping the region and the country get through tough economic times.

Barb Naramore reported that Minnesota's Governor Tim Walz has issued a series of short-duration executive orders that direct levels of allowed activity across government and business sectors. Minnesota DNR is taking an incremental approach to consider appropriate work activities, defaulting to telework to the maximum extent possible. The agency is developing a job safety analysis, including evaluating which field work activities can safely resume. Field work is being restarted when best practices can be implemented. Naramore said she anticipates that the restrictions will be changing for the state's work on UMRB's long term resource monitoring. The state has enacted a hiring freeze. There is a large volume of requests to evaluate to fulfill vacancies.

Galarneau reported that Wisconsin DNR is taking a similar approach to examining field work and taking a phased approach to restarting monitoring. Wisconsin state agencies are currently under a hiring freeze. Wisconsin's Governor Tony Evers took a swift approach to implementing action in anticipation of significant impacts to the state economy. There will be a process for seeking project-specific hiring needs.

Dru Buntin said Missouri DNR also has a hiring freeze in place as well as a process for evaluating exceptions. Buntin said the agency is being cautious with respect to hiring given that the full extent of impacts to state general and fee revenue is unknown. The agency's field work is impacted to a great extent. Field work continues as social distancing practices allow – e.g., dam safety inspections. Measures are also being implemented to reduce exposure to the coronavirus. The state parks have suspended camping and tours, closed lodging, and cancelled third party events over 10 people. Four parks and some trails and parking lots are completely closed because of high visitation numbers. Missouri DNR is starting to phase in normal operations – e.g., opening parks with congestion control activities. Reopening camp groups is challenged by maintaining clean common areas and securing protective equipment. The Missouri General Assembly passed the FY 2021 budget \$600 million in reductions. It is anticipated that further reductions will be required. The state has instituted withholdings this year and additional withholdings will likely be required in FY 2021. Buntin said he is unsure whether Congress will continue to provide assistance to states. Missouri's planning assumption is that no assistance will be provided and is developing contingency operations.

Rick Pohlman said Illinois is dealing with similar issues and planning scenarios, and is considering a hiring freeze with possible exceptions to new hires and movement of existing employees. Illinois DNR is proceeding with existing projects and exploring contracting support for new work. Pohlman said he

is cautiously optimistic, but noted that future state funding is unknown. Illinois DNR has been successful in reopening state parks.

Tim Hall said much of the Board members' comments related to Iowa. Starting this week, Iowa DNR will do work place assessments to determine when to have staff relocated back to the office buildings. It is unknown when massive telework will suspend.

Call participants added notes in the webinar chat feature, as follows:

- Olivia Dorothy said many municipalities struggled this spring with implementing flood fighting activities with contagion control measures – e.g., securing protective equipment and maintaining distance between people. Dorothy suggested preparing for safe flood fighting measures for future flood events, including planning for evacuations.
- Verlon Barnes said NRCS staff are implementing social distancing practices, including maximizing teleworking while maintaining staff in offices. NRCS is continuing to implement its programs and activities.
- Ken Westlake said USEPA has suspended its non-emergency inspections and sampling at select hazardous waste sites, including at Sauget, Illinois. Westlake and Amy Shields said regional staff are teleworking.

UMRBA's Water Quality Improvement Act Proposal

Lauren Salvato explained that UMRBA has put together proposed legislation for a Mississippi River program office, through which NRCS and USEPA would work collaboratively with the five Upper Mississippi River states to achieve goals and targets established in their respective nutrient reduction strategies. This includes coordinating targeted federal and state investment for technical assistance and financial support of farmers' voluntary conservation measures for the purposes of meeting nutrient reduction targets. Salvato pointed to pages D-1 to D-7 of the agenda packet for the proposed legislative text as well as a fact sheet explaining the measure.

UMRBA's desired objectives including the following:

- 1) Establish a Mississippi River program office to organize state and federal solutions for robust and cost-effective nutrient and sediment reduction on the Upper Mississippi River and its watershed. This extends from the longstanding relationships among USEPA, NRCS, and the five states built through the Hypoxia Task Force.
- 2) Minimize the effects of excess sediment and nutrients on the Upper Mississippi River and its watershed as well as the Gulf of Mexico by building on, and leveraging, existing state and federal programs and initiatives.
- 3) Improve knowledge of water quality status and trends on the Upper Mississippi River and its watershed among decision makers, water users, and the general public.

Salvato said the measure focuses solely on nonpoint sources of nutrient runoff. UMRBA members states had considered focusing this work solely on agriculture conservation measures, but ultimately decided to defer to the states' nutrient reduction strategies regarding allocation of resources. In large part, the states wanted to ensure that potential trading opportunities among farmers and urban nonpoint sources would not be precluded. The proposed measure includes language precluding additional regulation directly related to this measure and directs that no less than 70 percent of the annual appropriations be spent on nutrient reduction measures.

UMRBA is seeking an annual authorized appropriation of \$600 million, with at least 70 percent of the appropriation funding the nonpoint best management practices included in the states' nutrient reduction strategies and aligned with the Hypoxia Task Force's goals. This level of investment is needed to make the change desired across a subcontinental scale. The appropriation would also fund monitoring, research, and communications. The funds appropriated to the program office should not be subject to USEPA's competitive grants requirement. Other program offices have an exemption that allows for the funding to be allocated to the priorities established by the federal government and states.

Salvato said UMRBA will begin a convening and communications strategy to foster discussion and gain support for the measure. While this had included Congressional visits in D.C. and in-person workshops, future communications may depend on how the coronavirus unfolds.

In response to a question from Ken Westlake, Kirsten Wallace explained that there has been strong Congressional support. The inherent challenge of passing this legislation is that its jurisdiction overlaps the natural resources and agricultural committees. There may have been potential to advance the legislation through WRDA, but it still faced that same jurisdictional challenge. That will require having a few Congressional members who want to help it move through the process. In response to a question from Olivia Dorothy, this measure would utilize existing programs and projects. The idea is to better financially support the work and leverage capabilities among the states and federal partners, including NWS, USGS, USFWS, and other agencies. This would allow Congress to direct funding to the Upper Mississippi River watershed. Mike Klingner asked how this measure relates to UMRBA's proposal for a Section 729 watershed study. Wallace and Dru Buntin explained that the two efforts are complimentary. Whereas the proposed Water Quality Improvement Act expedites implementation of the state nutrient reduction strategies (slowing the volume and rate of water and sediment inputs to the river), the Section 729 planning process would create a systemic management plan for addressing the challenges of high and low water conditions and sedimentation in the river-floodplain. Verlon Barnes stressed that soil health is foundational to reducing runoff and water quality containments. A key element is helping agricultural producers to sustainably implement no-till, cover crops, diversified cropping systems, and grazing management among other best management practices. Barnes underscored the wide-ranging support that will be needed for this proposal to be realized.

Flood, Sediment, and Drought-Related Planning Efforts

"Keys to the River 2020" Report

Andrew Stephenson recalled that the intent of the active PAS agreement with the Corps is to clarify key issues, identify "high leverage" actions, and flesh out the questions and issues that would merit investigation through a Section 729 planning authority. The high leverage actions may require a longer term to achieve but are things that do not require further study or – i.e., we know that those things would help address the problems. Stephenson said a suite of those high leverage actions and Section 729 questions and issues were developed by various teams over the last six months, with insights gained from the 2019 summer listening sessions.

In March 2020, UMRBA and the Corps distributed a survey among the broad stakeholder distribution list to seek input on those ideas. Stephenson reported that the survey received 70 respondents, with roughly half of them representing public interests and half working within a federal, state, or local agency. Expertise was roughly even among flood risk, agriculture, and ecological health and resilience, with less expertise from navigation, water quality, science, and economic development and urban planning and management. Overall, the survey brought in new voices. About 85 percent or more had not participated in any way throughout the PAS process.

Comments that were relatively common among participants include a shared frustration with inaction over the last 30 years and that studies further delay action known to be needed. Several participants noted that drought is a lesser concern for them and that they believe solutions will ultimately reside in the watershed. There was also confusion about the PAS purpose – i.e., the suite of high-leverage actions seemed to be short-sighted when there are bigger issues. That may have been a result of including those actions first before the Section 729 questions and issues.

Stephenson explained the specific survey results for the individual high leverage actions and Section 729 questions and issues. In summary, the suite of items were mostly strongly supported with only a few oppositional remarks. Drought-related action items and questions/issues were supported slightly less strongly because of the issue being of a lesser concern. Further, some respondents remarked that there may be more lead time associated with responding to individual drought events.

Stephenson explained that the “Keys to the River 2020” report will organize these questions into the Corps’ format for a Section 729 plan – i.e., objectives; existing conditions, future without project conditions, and problems; potential features and action; and priorities for addressing them.

Sara Walling mentioned a forthcoming publication from the American Farmland Trust that will rate individual states on their respective policies for keeping land use in agriculture rather than in housing and other urban development purposes. It may serve as a helpful resource for evaluating policies affecting surface water inputs from the tributaries.

Through the conference platform’s chat feature, Mike Klingner said the purpose of H.R. 5288 is to build from analysis done through WRDA 1999 regarding how best to convey major floods with minimal property damage and no loss of life. Klingner said he views H.R. 5288 as complimentary to the Section 729 watershed planning effort. He asked for UMRBA’s perspective on moving quickly to address immediate flood damage reduction needs. Kirsten Wallace replied that UMRBA and the Corps are committed to working with our partners to work as expeditiously as possible understanding and recognizing the direct consequences of these significant events to those who work and live within the river floodplain. Wallace added that planning for the future also requires a deliberate, thoughtful, and engaging process. Steve Galarneau added that, from Wisconsin’s perspective, UMRBA is leaning into a space that has been extremely challenging and contentious. Galarneau expressed his appreciation to UMRBA, the five states, and the Corps for moving forward with this work knowing that it will be difficult. So far, Galarneau said this effort seems to be demonstrating that the result will be towards building solutions and not just writing a report that will ultimately be shelved.

St. Louis Riverfront – Meramec River Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Study

Matt Vielhaber explained that the St. Louis Riverfront – Meramec River Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Study was originally called for in a June 21, 2000 Resolution by the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. The Committee subsequently amended the resolution in the 2018 WRDA. Vielhaber underscored the value of the study’s shared commitment among federal, state, local, and nonprofit partners, noting that collaboration is key to expanding and leveraging efforts already underway within the Meramec Watershed.

Legacy lead contamination is a significant issue in the study area. Lead mining drastically altered the Meramec River Basin, specifically the Big River, which is now an active operable unit of a USEPA Superfund site. Approximately 250 million cubic yards of mine waste was produced from the 1700s to 1970s, causing significant changes to the natural river system.

Vielhaber provided an overview of the study area geography and its ecological challenges. The study’s goal was to identify cost-effective projects to protect, enhance, and restore the degraded aquatic

ecosystem. Objectives were to reduce migration and quantity of excessive sediment, increase quantity and quality of riparian corridor, and restore impacted channels and floodplains to a more natural, stable river system. Among seven alternatives evaluated, the \$92.5 million recommended plan includes restoring a suite of bank stabilization sites, sediment basin locations, bedload collectors, grade control structures, excavation sites, and reforestation. Implementation of the recommended plan is dependent on a construction authorization and appropriations.

Dru Buntin said the study has truly involved many great partners. MVS staff have been great to work with on this study. Buntin reflected that he has worked on lead sites and legacy contamination issues in the area for 15-20 years and said that, despite the challenges, the region has come a long way to successfully position ourselves to effectively address the issues. There is a delivery network in place through landowners to implement the actions following Congressional action through the authorization and appropriations.

Through the conference platform's chat feature, Klingner asked about the potential effects on reducing peak flow rates at the lower end of the Meramec River Basin. Vielhaber explained that the study included only one purpose – i.e., to evaluate ecosystem benefits. While there may be ancillary flood attenuation benefits (e.g., roughness from 675 acres of reforestation), those benefits were not quantified in this study. Vielhaber pointed to the recently completed Lower Meramec Floodplain Management Plan to potentially examine that question.

Klingner suggested that UMRBA summarize the collective efforts throughout the watershed to reduce attenuation into the Upper Mississippi River.

Minnesota River Basin Interagency Study

Chuck Theiling said the Minnesota River Basin Interagency Study also involved an extensive collaborating team and array of stakeholders. The study's purpose was to recommend an integrated watershed, water quality management, and ecosystem restoration analysis, leading to the development of a basin-scale watershed management plan for the Minnesota River Basin. More specifically, the intent of the study was to understand water, sediment, nitrogen and phosphorus transport across large landscapes to evaluate hydrologic, sediment, and nutrient runoff response to historic, existing, and probable future conditions.

Theiling explained the study's scope and process. He acknowledged that the study largely benefitted from the wealth of monitoring data in Minnesota. Recognizing that that basin's problems stem mostly from increased discharge and the resulting streambed and bank erosion, policy makers and managers wanted to answer question related to the following:

- Will the Minnesota buffer law impact water quality?
- Would water quality standards have been met under pre-settlement/historic vegetation conditions?
- How much would extreme scenarios affect flow and water quality?
- Is there a scenario that drives the tributaries closer to their TMDL standards?
- How would different land use scenarios affect wildlife?

Theiling presented an overview of scenario assessment results, including mapping, water quality standards analysis, alternative landscape analyses for waterfowl and grassland birds, environmental flows assessment for fish species richness, and gridded surface-subsurface hydrological analysis. Ultimately, the study helped to amplify the benefits of actions to store water on the landscape through best management practices to build soil health and stabilize riverine erosion.

2020 Navigation Season

Ben Emery provided an overview of channel conditions in the 9-foot navigation channel. There are several areas of concern in MVP, with channel work remaining following the 2019 conditions. There are three contract mechanical dredge plants, one government mechanical dredge plant, and the Dredge Goetz all operating currently within the District. Mechanical dredging will likely be needed through the summer. Pools 2 and 6 have limited placement site capacity. The channel in Pool 2 will be limited to reduce dredging volumes. MVD is currently reviewing the Pool 2 DMMP, which will add decades of dredged material capacity following its implementation.

The Corps is planning to transfer the Dredge Goetz from MVP to MVR at the end of June unless it is needed in MVR sooner. Emery reported that shoaling is present at the majority of problem areas experienced during the 2019 navigation season. There are two severe problem sites where 150-foot pilot channels are established. Emery noted that water levels are steadily falling, but recent and future predicted rainfall should alleviate some of the conditions and allow for the southward movement of dredges. Two government mechanical dredges are currently operating on the Mississippi River, and one government mechanical dredge and one contract cutterhead dredge are operating on the Illinois River. Pools 20-22 have not yet been surveyed due to COVID-19 restrictions. However, surveys are scheduled to occur there in late May 2020.

Emery reported that MVS is currently performing channel patrol and surveys for channel conditions from Pool 24 to Pool 27. This year's dredging needs should be in line with average levels, with only a few locations requiring dredging. The stretch of the river south of Lock 27 to the Ohio River confluence is experiencing high water conditions. The Corps anticipates dredging requirements there as river stages decrease.

Navigation and Ecosystem Sustainability Program

Andrew Goodall explained that, on February 10, 2020, the Corps published its FY 2020 work plan that included \$4.5 million for NESP with \$3 million earmarked for navigation-related work and \$1.5 million for ecosystem restoration-related work. Headquarters subsequently allocated the funds to the District in mid March 2020. Given that future funding is uncertain, District staff are focused on preparing a package of \$20 million in both navigation and ecosystem projects (\$10 million each) that can be ready for a construction contract award in FY 2021.

Goodall said the following navigation projects were identified in collaboration with the states and navigation industry:

- Navigation projects
 - Lock 25 I-Wall Modifications, necessary for future construction of a second 1,200-foot lock
 - Lock 14 mooring cell
 - Switchboats
 - Moore's Towhead mitigation, which would repair bank erosion
- Ecosystem restoration projects
 - Pool 2 wing dam/dike alterations
 - Twin Islands shoreline erosion protection
 - Alton Pool side channel restoration
 - Starved Rock island protection and aquatic plant restoration

Goodall explained that District staff are also consulting with the river teams and, individually, with USFWS and states to identify potential ecosystem restoration projects. The Corps is also developing suggested modifications to NESP's implementation guidance, seeking input from UMRBA, USFWS, USGS, and candidate nonprofit cost-share sponsors. NESP's website is being updated. Goodall will distribute the link when it is published.

Goodall requested UMRBA's assistance in coordinating projects that will be cost-shared (including assumption of O&M costs and assumptions) as well as identifying potential floodplain restoration opportunities and convening partnership discussions.

Administrative Issues

Retirements

Dru Buntin thanked Col. Brian Sizemore for his tenure serving as MVS District Commander. Buntin said Missouri DNR has enjoyed working with Col. Sizemore on many projects, including the Meramec River Basin study. After the 2019 flood, Col. Sizemore worked with states and partners to deploy Silver Jackets funding to help communities consider planning options to reduce flood damages. On behalf of UMRBA, Buntin wish him all the best in his retirement.

Col. Sizemore expressed appreciation to Buntin for his remarks and to UMRBA and other partners for being great teammates. Col. Sizemore provided some departing reflections. He described MVS's accomplishments over the past three years and said he looks forward to reading about the partners' future success on the river. Col. Sizemore said success is all about teamwork and shared visions. It will be important to come together with a shared vision for the river.

DOI Reorganization Update

Kirsten Wallace reported that USFWS Refuges in Iowa and Missouri will report to Region 3 along with Illinois, Minnesota, and Wisconsin. Sabrina Chandler reflected that USFWS considered UMRBA's comments when making that decision.

Future Meeting Schedule

August 2020 — Remote

- UMRBA quarterly meeting — August 11
- UMRB Coordinating Committee quarterly meeting — August 12

October 2020 — St. Paul

- UMRBA quarterly meeting — October 27
- UMRB Coordinating Committee quarterly meeting — October 28

February 2021 — TBD

- UMRBA quarterly meeting — February 23
- UMRB Coordinating Committee quarterly meeting — February 24

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:11 p.m.