

**Minutes of the
Upper Mississippi River System
Navigation Environmental Coordination Committee**

**August 6, 2009
Quarterly Meeting**

**Hotel Père Marquette
Peoria, Illinois**

Ken Barr of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers called the meeting to order at 8:03 a.m. on August 6, 2009. A complete list of attendees follows these minutes.

Minutes from the May 20, 2009 Meeting

Janet Sternburg moved and Jim Fischer seconded a motion to approve the draft minutes of the May 20, 2009 meeting as written. The motion carried unanimously.

Status Reports

Chuck Spitzack reported that, on July 31, 2009, MVR forwarded the Implementation Report to Congress (IRTC) to MVD for review. The IRTC is posted on the Corps' FTP site for partner access, and is also available in hardcopy upon request. Elizabeth Ivy said MVD has already provided the report electronically to Corps Headquarters (HQ), with formal hardcopy submission to follow shortly. She said it is not yet known whether the Administration will submit the IRTC to Congress.

Spitzack said FY 09 has been a challenging year due to budget uncertainties and staff reassignments. However, he said carry-over funds from this year will enhance program continuity into FY 10. Among NESP's FY 09 accomplishments, Spitzack cited enhanced coordination with EMP.

Spitzack said the Corps staff is drafting a briefing memo to General Walsh on behalf of the three district commanders regarding the UMRS public outreach efforts. Corps staff will share the memo with NECC and EMP-CC members and stakeholders when finalized. Spitzack clarified that, although the public outreach effort will focus primarily on the UMR and IWW, it will be implemented with awareness of basin and downstream connections. The outreach will be specific to the Corps' UMRS programs, but from a partnership perspective. The Corps' outreach effort will also compliment other ongoing efforts, including the McKnight Collaborative's Mississippi Campaign and General Walsh's effort to establish a 200-year vision for the basin.

Bill Wittland reported that VoxStrategic, a contractor for the Corps' public outreach effort, and Corps staff are in the process of gathering surveys from participants in the August 5, 2009 EMP-CC/NECC joint session and collecting information from other related activities. Wittland outlined next steps, including collecting further input from the Corps' Outreach Team, partners, and stakeholders and presenting a proposed approach to the EMP-CC and NECC at the November 18, 2009 joint session. He offered the following clarifications from the August 5 joint session discussion:

- The Mississippi River already has a brand. This effort is not intended to re-brand the River, but rather to create an umbrella brand for the partnership's collaborative efforts with the Corps.
- The brand needs to have an expansive focus beyond programs and projects to include people, uses, and communities.

- The brand name should be considered independently from taglines, which are developed for various targeted audiences and contexts.

Scott Whitney observed that the outreach effort is broader than NESP, but noted that General Walsh still wants NESP renamed.

Ken Barr reported that MVD's February 11, 2009 Advisory Panel (AP) proposal remains at HQ. Brad Walker expressed concern that the AP has not yet been established, noting that important planning work is underway in its absence. Spitzack said that he and Elizabeth Ivy are continuing to communicate with HQ regarding the importance of standing up the AP.

Floodplain Restoration System Team

Todd Strole reviewed NESP's floodplain restoration component as proposed in the Feasibility Study, authorized in WRDA 09, and interpreted in the NESP Implementation Guidance. He said that a Floodplain Restoration System Team (FRST) is being established for the purposes of 1) advancing the systemic restoration and management of floodplains for natural resources, flood damage reduction, and economic benefits across the UMR; 2) coordinating with other program interests; and 3) integrating into reach planning efforts via the Regional Support Team. Strole said potential team members include representatives from USACE, USEPA, USFWS, USFS, USDA, state resource agencies, NGOs, and academia. Among key coordination points for the FRST, Strole cited the river resource teams, NESP Science Panel, NESP Regional Support Team, Reach Planning Teams, Midwest Natural Resources Group, NESP Forestry Team "Project M," and USACE/NRCS National Partnering Team.

In response to a question from Joyce Collins, Scott Whitney said the Forestry Team's draft report has undergone partner review and should be finalized shortly. Spitzack and Barr clarified that NECC will have an opportunity to review the report before it is finalized.

Strole said one of the FRST's initial tasks will be to identify issues and opportunities it wishes to address. He suggested those may include recent hydrologic events, flood damages, data needs, economic opportunities, floodplain restoration options, and impediments to floodplain restoration. Strole asked NECC members and stakeholders to suggest any additional potential FRST members, as well as any other issues and opportunities. Strole announced that the first FRST conference call is scheduled for August 19, 2009.

Janet Sternburg asked whether the FRST would identify specific locations for floodplain restoration projects, or would be more science- and policy-focused, noting that this would determine the type of people who should participate. Strole said the Team could potentially do so, but observed that project identification is really the purview of the river management teams. Sternburg expressed concern that on-the-land managers are most knowledgeable about floodplain restoration opportunities, but are not well represented on the river management teams. Bob Clevensine suggested that representatives from the Upper Mississippi, Illinois, and Missouri Rivers Association (UMIMRA) and the Corps' Comp Plan team be included on the FRST.

In response to a question from Brad Walker, Strole said cost sharing and land acquisition issues (e.g., states' participation as cost share partners and coordination with the Wetlands Reserve Program) are possible topics for the FRST to investigate. Bernie Hoyer urged coordination with staff implementing the states' Wildlife Action Plans, noting that Iowa's plan is heavily focused on aquatic species. Tim Schlagenhaft suggested that levee/landowner and commodity producer perspectives be represented on the FRST.

Draft FY 10 NESP Work Plans

Ken Barr reported that the Senate has approved \$9 million in FY 10 preconstruction engineering and design (PED) funding for NESP. However, the House-passed bill does not include any funding for NESP, and thus prospects for conference committee funding are uncertain.

Scott Whitney said NESP will not likely receive an actual budget for several months. Whitney said he anticipates that the funding situation in FY 10 will be similar to that in FY 09, which began with considerable uncertainty under a continuing resolution authority (CRA). The funding uncertainties and staff needs of other USACE projects combined to result in several staff reassignments away from NESP, constraining the program's execution capability. When NESP's funding outlook stabilized in March, it was difficult to get these staff back on NESP projects. Carry-over money from FY 09 may serve to lessen disruptions should FY 10 start with similar uncertainty.

Whitney presented an initial draft of the FY 10 NESP work plan, reflecting \$9 million, \$11 million, and \$13 million funding scenarios, based on the Senate's funding level. Whitney reported that new team leaders have been assigned to several of the project delivery teams (PDTs). He also noted that design work on Locks 22 and 25 is being coordinated as much as possible to maximize efficiencies. Janet Sternburg expressed concern that turnover in PDTs, both within the Corps and among partners, will erode institutional memory regarding key decisions and agreements over time (e.g., L&D 22 issues related to mussel impacts). Ken Barr said these types of decisions and understandings should be captured in each project's NEPA documentation.

Elizabeth Ivy questioned the decision to plan for NESP at the \$9 million, \$11 million, and \$13 million funding levels, when the current Congressional range is \$0 to \$9 million. Whitney explained that the \$11 million and \$13 million planning scenarios reflect carry-over from FY 09, and, in the case of the \$13 million level, also possible FY 09 stimulus funding. Whitney said NESP could potentially receive general investigation stimulus funds that currently are being reallocated within the Corps. Although NESP did not receive stimulus funds in the first round of allocations, it was a high priority in the Corps' initial list of candidate projects. [Subsequent to the meeting, Corps staff reported that no FY 09 stimulus funds were provided for NESP.]

Whitney said that, under funding in the \$9-\$13 million range, NESP will complete planning on seven of its ecosystem restoration projects, and will thus need to select new projects for planning in order to fully execute its restoration program for the year. Whitney said how soon NESP would need new projects in FY 10 is dependent on the funding level and any restrictions on activity if FY 10 starts under a continuing authority. Jeff DeZellar urged Corps staff to use the projects selected in the reach planning process.

Bernie Hoyer asked how soon after receiving construction general funds could NESP initiate project construction. Barr said some ecosystem restoration projects and small-scale navigation projects (e.g., mooring cells and switchboats) could be ready for construction in FY 10, with more robust construction capability in FY 11. Jeff Stamper said Locks 22 and 25 are about 20 percent through the design phase. He said small elements of the lock construction could be let for contract by the end of 2010. But, Spitzack cautioned that constructing locks in a piecemeal fashion is risky. In response to a question from Hoyer, Stamper estimated that lock design work could be completed in two years, if the project is allocated at least \$35 million. Stamper also noted that, in addition to the restoration projects and small scale navigation measures Barr cited, some mitigation projects would be ready for construction in FY 10.

Barr suggested including a more detailed discussion of the First Increment Plan at the November 18, 2009 NECC meeting, to review the proposed implementation scenarios under different funding

levels. Barr said the Corps is inclined to continue its roughly even allocation of funds between ecosystem restoration and navigation projects, if funding levels continue to be low. Stamper concurred, emphasizing that lock construction will not be feasible unless NESP receives significantly increased funding. Spitzack stressed the need to complete lock design and receive consistent, adequate funding from Congress in order to achieve efficient implementation of lock construction. Spitzack and Stamper explained that, funding permitting, constructing the new locks at 22 and 25 simultaneously would yield significant construction and operational efficiencies.

Barr noted that the reach planning teams (RPTs) will be refocusing on identifying mitigation projects. He suggested that these projects be a topic of discussion at the November 18 NECC meeting. Stamper mentioned that design on moorings is nearing completion, and will likely be ready for construction shortly. Barr reported that supplemental NEPA documents will be finalized soon on Locks 22 and 25, as well as a number of small scale navigation projects.

Barr explained that, at this time, no further design work is needed on the water level management project in Pool 5 as it will likely not be implemented in the near future. Barr reported that design work on the Pool 2 Wingdam/Dike Alteration project is completed. Thus, the FY 10 scenarios do not include funding for either project.

Barr said funds have been set aside for the Root River and Pierce County floodplain restoration projects, but that further work is required on agreements with Minnesota and Wisconsin, respectively, for these projects. Jim Fischer said Wisconsin will likely be interested in the Pierce County project, even in the current economic state.

DeZellar reported that MVP will advance the Root River proposal to MVD for review shortly. The project agreement will ultimately require HQ-level approval. DeZellar said MVP has coordinated heavily with MVD and HQ on this agreement, and, thus he anticipates a relatively quick approval process at both levels. Ivy said this is the first agreement of this type for NESP. She hopes that the Root River agreement will become a model, streamlining the process for future floodplain projects. Tim Schlagenhaft reported that the MN DNR has signed the Root River agreement. The project is a high priority for the agency.

Barr highlighted NESP's efforts to resolve various policy and implementation issues, creating a foundation for efficient implementation of the program once it receives construction general funds. DeZellar announced that MVP has approved the Pool 2 Wingdam/Dike Alteration project design. He said the authority to approve such projects at the district-level will significantly enhance NESP's efficiency. DeZellar noted that the L&D 8 embankment lowering project has been challenging, but has received substantial partner participation.

Barr reported that an external peer review contract for the fish passage design project at L&D 22 was awarded last week. He said an Independent Technical Review (ITR) has been completed, and the Project Implementation Report (PIR) is currently underway. In response to a request by Joyce Collins, Barr said he will provide a list of the peer reviewers to partners, when those names are known. In response to questions from Collins and Barry Johnson, Barr said the peer review will be done on the entire PIR, including the monitoring plan. Barr and Brian Johnson said they anticipate that the L&D 26 fish passage will be ready for construction by late 2011. Collins asked if an external peer review would also be done on the L&D 26 fish passage design. Barr said it is not yet known whether an external review will be needed at 26, but explained that there are a number of factors that could trigger one, including project costs, controversy, or Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) findings. In response to a question from Rick Frietsche, Brian Johnson said value engineering is a separate process from external peer review.

Brian Johnson reported that the Scheniman Chute side channel restoration project is ready for internal review. With estimated costs just below \$5 million, Scheniman Chute is eligible for district-level approval. Johnson said the Herculaneum side channel restoration project is ready for public review and its alternative formulation briefing (AFB). He reported that an internal agency technical review (ATR) on the Buffalo side channel restoration project design will be completed shortly. Following the ATR, the project will be ready for public review. Johnson noted that costs for the Buffalo side channel project will come in well below \$5 million.

Barr explained that the Corps has been working on planning and design for a large number of restoration projects to ensure NESP's ability to ramp up quickly should it receive a construction new start. Sternburg asked at what funding level the Corps would be confident that NESP has stability. Barr said the Corps has explored a range of scenarios and strategies to ensure NESP ability to adjust to different circumstances. The lowest funding scenario under which any lock construction is contemplated is \$35 million annually. Spitzack added that the restoration component could operate very efficiently with \$100 million per year. Spitzack said NESP as a whole will not be successful if total funding levels off at or below \$100 million.

Ivy said the Inland Waterway Trust Fund (IWTF) is currently the biggest hurdle to NESP receiving construction funds. In response to a question from Bernie Schonhoff, Spitzack explained that two major issues must be resolved: 1) a national capital investment plan for navigation is needed and 2) a mechanism to ensure adequate revenue into the IWTF to support the capital investment plan must be agreed upon. Jeff Stamper said there are about \$17 billion worth of navigation projects in the Corps' project pipeline, but there is currently only \$170 million available annually in federal and IWTF money to construct those projects. He observed that Olmsted and Emsworth on the Ohio River will take up most of the available funding for the next several years.

Barr said he will be asking the PDTs to develop a list of milestones and products. Sternburg reiterated her request for updated PDT membership lists. She noted that anticipated staff reductions in MO DoC may result in changes in the agency's representation on the PDTs. Whitney said that PDTs' milestones and products will need to be completed before the end of September, so that they can be integrated into NESP's FY 10 work plan.

Project Highlights

LaGrange Lock

Jeff Stamper showcased the hydraulic model for the LaGrange Lock. So far, the Corps has spent approximately \$350,000 for hydraulic modeling. He explained that this type of model can serve as important communication tool for designers, partners and stakeholders, Congressional officials, and the public. Stamper said pilots provided valuable information in the model's development. Stamper described the model's abilities to explore real world scenarios, such as using time lapse cameras to analyze lock approaches.

The Corps is modeling baseline conditions for LaGrange this year. Stamper emphasized the importance of having a precise baseline, in order to ensure that the model accurately responds to subsequent modifications of the structure.

Backwater Restoration: Peoria Pool

Marshall Plumley described the Corps' efforts to restore natural floodplain habitat in the middle Peoria Pool, which includes Meadow, Wightman, and Goose Lakes and Babbs and Sawyer Sloughs. He explained that, pre-impoundment, the middle Peoria Pool was a floodplain marsh with few backwater

lakes. However, the diversion of the Chicago River and impoundment combined to increase water levels by 6 to 8 feet in the Illinois River, creating several large backwater lakes, which have since been subject to considerable sedimentation. Plumley said the Corps is trying to restore function and process to the extent possible given the altered hydrology. Plumley listed the following stressors currently affecting the Illinois River reach:

- Altered hydrology (i.e., diversion and impoundment increase and stabilize river stage)
- Sedimentation leading to loss of backwater lake surface area and depth
- Poor water quality (i.e., high turbidity)
- Lack of emergent and submersed aquatic plant production
- Degraded aquatic habitat
- Degraded wetland habitat

The Corps has identified the following ecosystem goals for the middle Peoria Pool:

- Improve emergent and submerged aquatic vegetation in middle Peoria Pool
- Increase area and quality of resting and feeding habitat for migratory waterfowl
- Improve area and quality of over-wintering habitat for native fish species
- Improve the quality and diversity of floodplain forests
- Maintain connectivity of the Illinois River and its floodplain

Plumley said the potential restoration techniques include enhancing topographic diversity and constructing islands in order to enhance water quality and decrease wind fetch and turbidity. Plumley said the Corps has been working on project modeling for the past 18 months, exploring whether the proposed measures will be sustainable and yield the desired benefits. He anticipates that the PIR will be completed in about a year. Plumley noted that the project area was originally confined to the backwaters, but has expanded slightly. While some project features will be 100 percent federally funded, some features will require cost-share with partners.

Ken Barr asked if the PDT is considering experimental designs and learning opportunities. Plumley said the PDT has defined immediate and secondary measures. Implementation of secondary measures will depend on how the first round measures function. Jon Duyvejonck asked whether the Corps has identified any potential for self-sustaining channels, noting the significant costs associated with maintenance dredging. Plumley said the models are being used to identify areas with the most potential for self-sustaining features. The project will also integrate any lessons learned from the EMP's Peoria Lake HREP. Barr said the project will likely need maintenance dredging throughout its 50-year design life, especially with the significant sediment loads and the low gradient on the Illinois River.

Twin Islands

Barr said design on Twin Islands is slated for completion in FY 10, with the project ready for construction in FY 11. Barr reported that the Corps will be working with USFWS, Illinois, and TNC to reopen efforts on the Emiquon West project. Rick Frietsche noted that there are some issues related to levee management that need to be resolved before going forward.

Illinois River Team

Rick Mollahan reported that the Illinois River Team (IRT) and the Executive Committee for the Section 519 Illinois River Basin Restoration Committee held a joint meeting on July 22, 2009. Mollahan said Hank DeHaan summarized two of the Section 519 projects, Peoria Island and Waubonsie Creek, and

provided an update on the program's funding outlook. Mollahan said the joint meeting also included a discussion on the Science Advisory Committee (SAC).

Mollahan reported that the IRT will recommend to the Illinois River Coordinating Council (IRCC) that it reestablish the Illinois SAC for one year to evaluate the future organization, function, and composition needed to provide scientific and technical support. The IRT further recommended the SAC be configured to support not only the IRCC, but also the recently authorized councils for the Mississippi River and the Ohio/Wabash Rivers within Illinois.

Mollahan said the full meeting summary and other IRT-related documents are available at: <ftp://163.191.72.109/>. The user name is 'dnr' and the password is 'idnr.' Enter the 'Public' folder and 'Illinois River Team' subfolders.

Mollahan reported that, under Section 519, there was sufficient funding to initiate, but not complete, a dredging and island construction project located near the McClugage Bridge in Peoria Lake. Illinois was concerned with the project's ability to overwinter mid-construction and thus provided the necessary funds to rip rap a vulnerable area, which was not included in the original plan. Mollahan said these extra state expenditures will be credited to its cost-share on the project. Mollahan also reported that Illinois' FY 10 capital bill included funds for match on restoration projects. Illinois is also considering an option where it would pay the federal portion of unfunded projects, with the agreement that those funds would be used to offset the state's share of future projects in the area.

Science Advisory Panel Activities

Barry Johnson reported that the Science Advisory Panel met with the side channel PDTs during the June RRAT boat tour, and will continue to consult directly with various PDTs as needed. The Science Panel conveyed its thoughts to the Corps regarding a draft charter for the Panel, and is now waiting for the Corps' response. Johnson reported that the Science Panel is completing its report on applying adaptive management to water level management (WLM) efforts. He said the Panel will share its draft report with the water level management teams for feedback at the September 1-3 Science Panel meeting, a portion of which will be devoted to meeting with representatives of the WLM teams. The report will address what is known about WLM conceptual models, important uncertainties, and the Panel's recommendations.

Johnson said the Science Panel would like to meet with the Illinois River Science Advisory Committee to discuss coordination, how best to avoid duplication, and opportunities for future collaboration. In response to a question from Ken Barr, Rick Mollahan said he does not know whether the SAC will be ready to meet with the Science Panel this fall, as the SAC is still in the process of confirming members. In the interim, Mollahan encouraged the Science Panel to work directly with the SAC's Chair.

In response to a question from Tim Schlagenhaft, Johnson said invitations to the September 1-3 Science Panel meeting will be sent out shortly. He added that even though all participants on the Water Level Management Task Force (WLMTF) may not be able to attend the meeting, they will have an opportunity to comment on the Science Panel's report. Barr welcomed suggestions for invitees to the Science Panel meeting in September. He said the Regional Support Team (RST) will also be attending the meeting. Schlagenhaft urged the Science Panel to give the WLMTF adequate time to review its draft. Barr said the report will also be presented to the NECC for review prior to being finalized. In response to a question from Brian Johnson, Barry Johnson said the Science Panel has referenced a Southern Illinois University study related to water level management. Jeff DeZellar and Schlagenhaft suggested that the Science Panel consult with Mary Stefanski, Chair of the WLMTF. Jim Fischer encouraged the Science Panel to ensure that all relevant stakeholders are given an opportunity to review the draft report.

In response to a question from Fischer, Barr said he anticipates that, by September, the Corps will distribute a draft charter for the Science Panel to NECC members and stakeholders.

Partner Reports

Rick Nelson announced that Sam Hamilton is the new USFWS Director. Hamilton is a career biologist and manager with the USFWS, and previously served as the Southeast Regional Director.

Joyce Collins said the Open Reach is witnessing an increase in hydropower proposals, especially hydrokinetic projects. She reported that the USFWS has developed a study plan to ensure that the effects from hydropower on fish and wildlife are dealt with adequately in the project review process. Collins said the study review plan will be available on Region 3's website shortly.

Janet Sternburg reported that the MO DoC is reducing staff. Impacts on the river team will not be known until September.

Vince Shay reported that TNC is undergoing significant organizational changes, including to its river programs. The Upper and Lower Mississippi River and Illinois River programs will combine into one programmatic structure, located in the Central Region. Shay added that the TNC is also reducing its global priorities from 50 to approximately 15.

Gretchen Benjamin said that TNC and the Corps hold a biennial meeting as part of their national-level MOU. She said that the next conference is scheduled for October 26-29, 2009 in Washington State. There will be special sessions on the Upper Mississippi River, as well as the Lower Mississippi and Gulf of Mexico. TNC is co-sponsoring the "Visions of a Sustainable Mississippi River" conference in Collinsville, Illinois on August 11-13. Benjamin also announced that TNC and Audubon are partnering to identify priorities for the Mississippi River System to be used by each organization.

Tim Schlagenhaft said MN DNR will be hosting the UMRCC Fish and Wildlife Tech Sections' meetings this fall. In conjunction, there will be a retirement party for Gary Wege.

Max Starbuck said the National Corn Growers Association (NCGA) is going through an organizational restructuring. The Association is becoming more active in climate change, sustainability, and water quality issues, and is developing a web page specifically related to water quality. Starbuck announced that, on August 25-26, NCGA will host a conference in St. Louis about land use worldwide.

Rick Mollahan reported that Illinois' FY 10 capital budget includes \$14.7 million in match funding for restoration projects. Mollahan announced that the IL DNR has a new Assistant Director, John Rogner, who comes to the DNR after having led the FWS's Chicago Field Office.

Doug Blodgett encouraged partners to visit Emiquon while they are in the area and see the tremendous biological response to the management changes that have been made.

Jon Duyvejonck said that an Upper Mississippi River Conference is scheduled for September 23-25 in Moline.

Jim Fischer reported that WI DNR is facing a 10 percent budget cut, and employees will be required to take 8 days of furlough. There will likely be no hires in the next 2 to 4 years. As a result, the department is going through a workload reduction effort, reexamining all of its activities. Fischer said that WI DNR is prioritizing permit approvals for stimulus-funded projects, and working hard to

maintain a relatively fast turnaround. He also reported that WI DNR has been working with MVP for several years on L&D 3 safety and embankment issues. While agreement has been reached on the safety and upper embankment elements, issues still remain between the two agencies regarding the lower embankment and fish passage. Fischer also noted that WI DNR's Secretary, Matt Frank, recently visited with the UMR Team, and expressed his interest in elevating the UMR's visibility, particularly in terms of ecological restoration projects. Secretary Frank also expressed interest in participating on the proposed NESP Advisory Panel.

Mike Jawson said that President Obama has nominated Marcia McNutt to be the next USGS Director. Jawson also announced that UMESC will be celebrating its 50th anniversary with an open house, which is scheduled for September 12 at the Center. Jawson explained that UMESC is anticipating three major research projects under the Great Lakes Initiative funding pending in Congress. Much of this research, particularly in the areas of invasive species, food chains, and contaminants, should have applicability to the Upper Mississippi River.

Marshall Plumley announced that the Illinois River Conference in Peoria is scheduled for October 20-22, 2009.

Other Business

Rick Nelson expressed concern that program updates are dominating NECC and EMP-CC agendas, and often covered more than once during the quarterly meeting series. He suggested that providing updates via conference call/webinar prior to the regularly scheduled quarterly meetings could increase efficiency of the quarterly meetings; decrease information overlap between the NECC, EMP-CC/NECC, and EMP-CC meetings; and allow for more time for issue-focused topics at the quarterly meetings. Jim Fischer added that this approach would also allow partners to coordinate internally prior to the quarterly meetings. Ken Barr recalled Bernie Schonhoff's previous suggestion that some special topics might also be well-suited to addressing via webinar, in part to allow for broader participation.

In response to a question from Jon Duyvejonck, Barr said any decision regarding the possible integration of the NECC and EMP-CC will be deferred until after the NESP Advisory Panel is established. He noted that the AP will decide what, if any, working groups it wants to establish. Then the Corps and its EMP partners will need to consider whether the EMP-CC can and should integrate with any group the AP has established. In the interim, Barr said NECC and EMP-CC will continue to meet jointly to address issues of mutual interest. He stressed that, at present, NESP and EMP are at different points in their development and thus there is clear value to maintaining separate identities for NECC and EMP-CC. Elizabeth Ivy concurred.

Janet Sternburg asked if there would be any limitations on the number of connections available on the webinars. Barr said the technology is available to support large webinars, though cost may be a factor. Joyce Collins encouraged Corps staff to provide read ahead materials in advance of the conference calls/webinars, as is typically done for the quarterly meetings.

The following conference calls/webinars were scheduled:

- September 8 at 9 a.m. — conference call regarding public outreach
- October 8 at 9 a.m. — conference call regarding agendas for November webinar and quarterly meetings; reach planning update
- November 3 at 1-3 p.m. — webinar agenda TBD [Note: The webinar was subsequently rescheduled to November 2 from 1 to 4 p.m., with the agenda focused on mussel-related issues.]

The upcoming quarterly meetings are as follows:

- **November 2009 — Quad Cities**
 - UMRBA — November 17
 - **NECC — November 18**
 - **Joint EMP-CC and NECC — afternoon of November 18**
 - EMP-CC — November 19

- **February 2010 — St. Louis**
 - UMRBA — February 23
 - EMP-CC — February 24
 - **Joint EMP-CC and NECC — afternoon of February 24** (if needed)
 - **NECC — February 25**

- **May 2010 — St. Paul**
 - UMRBA — May 18
 - **NECC — May 19**
 - **Joint EMP-CC and NECC — afternoon of May 19** (if needed)
 - EMP-CC — May 20

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:40 p.m.

**NECC Attendance List
August 6, 2009**

NECC Members

Elizabeth Ivy	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVD
Ken Barr	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVR
Rick Nelson	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, RIFO
Rick Mollahan	Illinois Department of Natural Resources
Bernie Schonhoff	Iowa Department of Natural Resources
Tim Schlagenhaft	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

Kevin Bluhm	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVP
Jeff DeZellar	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVP
Chuck Spitzack	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVR
T. Leo Keller	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVR
Jim Homann	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVR
Marshall Plumley	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVR
Scott Whitney	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVR
Brian Johnson	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVS
Jeff Stamper	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVS
Bob Clevestine	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, RIFO
Joyce Collins	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Marion Sub-Office
Jon Duyvejonck	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, RIFO
Rick Frietsche	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, UMR Refuge
Jason Wilson	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Great Rivers NWR
Mike Jawson	U.S. Geological Survey, UMESC
Barry Johnson	U.S. Geological Survey, UMESC
Bernie Hoyer	Iowa Department of Natural Resources
Brad Walker	Izaak Walton League
Anngie Richter	JFNew
Max Starbuck	National Corn Growers Association
Vince Shay	The Nature Conservancy
Gretchen Benjamin	The Nature Conservancy
Doug Blodgett	The Nature Conservancy
Todd Strole	The Nature Conservancy/U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Kim Schneider	Schneider Communications
Bill Wittland	VoxStrategic
Tom Boland	MACTEC
Barb Naramore	Upper Mississippi River Basin Association
Dave Hokanson	Upper Mississippi River Basin Association
Kirsten Mickelsen	Upper Mississippi River Basin Association