

**Minutes of the
178th Quarterly Meeting of the
Upper Mississippi River Basin Association**

May 19, 2026

Edina, MN

Chris Wieberg called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. on May 20, 2026.

Participants were as follows:

UMRBA Representatives and Alternates

Rick Pohlman	Illinois Department of Natural Resources
Kirk Hansen	Iowa Department of Natural Resources
Grant Wilson	Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
Patrick Phenow	Minnesota Department of Transportation
Chris Wieberg	Missouri Department of Natural Resources
Chris Klenklen	Missouri Department of Agriculture
Wade Strickland	Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

Federal UMRBA Liaisons:

Col. Matthew Chase	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVD [on behalf of MG Kimberly Peeples]
Sabrina Chandler	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
JC Nelson	U.S. Geological Survey, Midcontinent Region
Travis Black	U.S. Department of Transportation, MARAD

Others In Attendance:

Nicole Vidales	Illinois Environmental Protection Agency
Chad Craycraft	Illinois Department of Natural Resources
Adam Schnieders	Iowa Department of Natural Resources
Liz Scherber	Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
Neil Rude	Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
Sam Clary	Missouri Department of Conservation
Adrian Stocks	Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
Sammi Boyd	Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
Deanna Prestwood	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVD
Brian Chewning	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVD
Kelly Keefe	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVD
Jim Cole	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVD

Samantha Thompson	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVD
Brian Johnson	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, RPDN, MVS
Nathan Wallerstedt	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVP
John Henderson	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVP
Melanie Peterson	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVP
Dan Reburn	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVP
Trevor Cyphers	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVP
Marshall Plumley	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVR
Davi Michl	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVR
Shawn Sullivan	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVS
Greg Kohler	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVS
Kraig McPeck	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Ecological Services
Sara Schmuecker	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Ecological Services
Lauren Larson	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Ecological Services
Matt Mangan	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Ecological Services
Jon Amberg	U.S. Geological Survey, UMESC
Jim Fischer	U.S. Geological Survey, UMESC
Jennifer Dieck	U.S. Geological Survey, UMESC
Jeffery Robichaud	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 7
David Pratt	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 7
Jared Schmalstieg	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 7
Madeleie Castle	Senator Josh Hawley Office
Alice Messer	City of St. Paul, Minnesota
Alicia Vasto	Audubon
Jill Crafton	Izaak Walton League of America
Chuck Camillo	Midwest Flood Control Association
Olivia Dorothy	One Mississippi
Andrew Stephenson	The Nature Conservancy
Aaron Field	Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership
James Summers	Private Citizen
Kirsten Wallace	Upper Mississippi River Basin Association
Brian Stenquist	Upper Mississippi River Basin Association
Mark Ellis	Upper Mississippi River Basin Association
Tyler Leske	Upper Mississippi River Basin Association
Natalie Lenzen	Upper Mississippi River Basin Association
Sadie Neuman	Upper Mississippi River Basin Association
Laura Talbert	Upper Mississippi River Basin Association
Josh Wolf	Upper Mississippi River Basin Association

Minutes

Kirk Hansen moved and Grant Wilson seconded a motion to approve the draft minutes of the February 24, 2026 meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

Executive Director's Report

Kirsten Wallace pointed to the Executive Director's report in the agenda packet for a summary of the Association's work efforts since the February 2026 meeting.

Wallace elaborated on UMRBA's advocacy efforts as well as its involvement in partnership planning efforts through UMRR and NESP.

Wallace expressed appreciation to the USACE MVD leadership team for hosting UMRBA in March 2027. The meeting affirmed that the USACE, USFWS, USGS, and the states are aligned in their vision and priorities for the Upper Mississippi River System.

Wallace announced two new partnerships for UMRBA, as listed below, and asked for the Board's authorization to enter into contractual agreements for each project:

1. A project with the North Dakota State University to create a nutrient management decision support tool (or dashboard) for the Upper Mississippi River Basin in order to promote the use of multi-benefit conservation practices in agricultural production systems. Minnesota PCA is also involved as a technical expert.

Grant Wilson moved and Rick Pohlman seconded a motion to authorize Kirsten Wallace to enter into a contractual agreement with North Dakota State University to participate as a partner in the project, which is expected to be three years in duration with funding of up to \$120,000 for UMRBA's contributions to the project.

2. A project with the University of Minnesota to explore machine learning (artificial intelligence) technologies to improve seasonal-to-subseasonal forecasting for Upper Mississippi River water levels.

Wade Strickland moved and Kirk Hansen seconded a motion to authorize Kirsten Wallace to enter into a contractual agreement with the University of Minnesota to participate as a partner in a project, which is expected to be three years in duration with funding of up to \$150,000 for UMRBA's contributions to the project.

Wallace provided a brief summary of the Association's estimates for income and expenses in FY 2026 and FY 2027 as well as major assumptions. In response to a request from Wallace, Hansen moved and Wilson seconded a motion to amend the FY 2026 budget for the Association as provided to the Board on May 12, 2026. The projected net loss of \$11,202. This assumes all of state travel reimbursement allocation will be drawn. The motion passed unanimously.

Wilson moved and Strickland seconded a motion to adopt the FY 2027 budget for the Association as provided to the Board on May 18, 2026. The projected net income of \$41,613. The motion was approved unanimously.

Wallace pointed to the UMRBA financial statements for January 2026 through March 2026 as provided on pages B-6 to B-11 of the agenda packet. Wilson moved and Pohlman seconded the motion to accept the Association's budget report and balance sheet as included in the agenda packet. The motion was approved unanimously.

UMRBA Water Quality Report

Adrian Stocks reported that the UMRBA Water Quality Executive Council (WQEC) has developed a work plan for UMRBA's water quality program in FY 2027. Stocks summarized key elements of projects to advance interstate water quality monitoring and nutrient reduction.

UMRBA is currently implementing a one-year fixed site monitoring project and developing a database to maintain the monitoring data. The WQEC is also reevaluating cost estimates for full implementation and will develop materials to use in exploring funding opportunities.

UMRBA is developing approaches for enhancing the states' interstate collaboration in reducing nutrient load reductions. UMRBA continues to participate in the Hypoxia Task Force, and this year will initiate a partnership with the North Dakota State University to develop a nutrient management decision support tool (or dashboard) for the Upper Mississippi River Basin.

Federal Agency Reports

Federal agency leaders shared insights on fiscal and organizational matters. The agency representatives who shared the briefings were Deanna Prestwood on behalf of USACE; Jeffery Robichard on behalf of USEPA; Sabrina Chandler on behalf of USFWS; JC Nelson on behalf of USGS; and Travis Black on behalf of MARAD.

Kirk Hansen and Kirsten Wallace pointed out that the FY 2027 Budget seems to place caps on personnel allocated to individual USACE programs and projects. The FY 2027 Budget seems to suggest a significant decrease in funding available for Division and District USACE personnel on certain programs such as UMRB. In response to questions about clarity and flexibility, Prestwood explained that MVD is actively reviewing the FY 2027 budget proposal, gathering the questions of potential implications, and seeking clarity on those very questions. Prestwood said MVD and the UMR Districts will continue to share information as they gain clarity and certainty. In response to a question from Wade Strickland, Prestwood said project sponsors and partners involved in PDTs should be provided with information about project implementation status and schedule.

Crosby Farms

Alice Messer presented on the City of St. Paul's plans to develop a an estimated \$60 million gateway and environmental education hub at the Crosby Farm Regional Park. The project includes a bluff-top welcome station, learning center, cafe, and boathouse. It also includes a partnership with USACE to implement an ecosystem project through the Navigation and Ecosystem Sustainability Program.

Liz Sherber provided an overview of Minnesota DNR's efforts to convene and facilitate partnership coordination and Neil Rude presented on NESP ecological project objectives and plans.

Administrative Matters

Future Meeting Schedule

August 2026 in St. Louis

— UMRBA Quarterly Meeting – August 4

- UMRB Coordinating Committee Quarterly Meeting – August 5

October 2026 to be held in the Quad Cities

- UMRB Quarterly Meeting – October 13
- UMRB Coordinating Committee Quarterly Meeting – October 14-15
- NESP Coordinating Committee Quarterly Meeting – October 14-15

February 2027 to be held virtually

- UMRB Quarterly Meeting – February 16
- UMRB Coordinating Committee Quarterly Meeting – February 17
- NESP Coordinating Committee Quarterly Meeting – February 18

May 2027 to be held in the Twin Cities Metro Area

- UMRB Quarterly Meeting – May 18
- UMRB Coordinating Committee Quarterly Meeting – May 19 and/or May 20
- NESP Coordinating Committee Quarterly Meeting – May 19 and/or May 20

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:53 a.m.