

ANALYSIS TEAM CONFERENCE CALL MINUTES, APRIL 19, 2004 (DRAFT)

Members Present: See attached list

John Sullivan chaired the meeting.

Roll Call

A-Team members welcomed Tim Yager, USFWS-Fort Snelling, MN, who replaced Dick Steinbach.

Approval of Minutes

Motions were made by members to accept minutes from our January 6th conference call and our February 10th meeting. All approved the minutes with no corrections or additions.

Budget Updates for FY04/05

Marvin Hubbell reported that MPR's (fund transfers to UMESC and states) have been executed from Corps to UMESC. Linda Ott said Tom Kelly had all 424's (WHAT ARE 424s?) except WI. Terry Dukerschein said she was working with the Fisheries Bureau in Madison to expedite this matter. Marvin encouraged everyone to execute budgets as efficiently as possible because of the late date.

Partnership Survey of LTRMP

John Sullivan asked members how they would like to proceed to discuss this issue. The point was not to answer the survey's questions but ask if members had questions on what was being asked. He also asked if there was a timeline and a need for future meetings to come to a resolution on how to proceed. Rick Frietsche indicated the survey results would provide an idea of how to proceed. Rick and Marvin indicated the goal was to complete the survey, consolidate the partnership responses and develop program alternatives, for EMPCC consideration and recommendations. This may not happen by the May EMPCC meeting, but would be expected to be completed by the August meeting.

Janet Sternburg asked if EMPCC members would get the summary before the May meeting so that it can be discussed within partner agencies prior to the meeting. Pat Heglund indicated the consolidated report would not be completed by the May EMPCC meeting so there will be nothing to respond to.

John Sullivan asked if there would be a meeting with EMPCC and others to review the survey recommendations. Pat explained their role is to pull responses together and consolidate similar alternatives. The process would be to develop alternatives for consideration. It will be up to the Corps (Roger) and USGS (Leslie) to discuss and implement after receiving partnership input (through EMPCC). One question (Janet) letter sent out went to EMPCC members. Anyone else who's not EMPCC member

receive survey? No. In Mo they are also contacting other agencies who use the info. Or invest.

There was some discussion concerning if other agencies (ILEPA, MPCA, MODNR) were providing input to those agencies that are the "official" EMP partnering agencies for completing the survey. It was not clear if this coordination was occurring but all recognized a need to pursue this.

Tom Boland commented there certainly is a need to ask the questions. The LTRM annual budget shows downward trend from late 90's. Savings and "seepage" (slippage) and inflation cuts deeper and deeper into the budget. Letting folks know the importance of this program has never been more important. Who will make the decision of how to restructure?

John Sullivan shared Tom's comment as well and wondered if a restructuring decision will receive input from the A-Team. The current course indicates it will be resolved at the policy level. Do we have the scientific basis for changing it rather than just budget-driven?

Pat Heglund indicated it is federal money coming to federal agencies and the federal agencies will ultimately need to make the decision, but they (Program Assessment Team) will come to EMPCC and get partnership input. She also indicated that federal regulations prohibit outside agencies from making policy recommendations.

John Sullivan asked if members had any specific questions on the survey itself. For example, he wondered what the conceptual models were for individual resource components (question I-1). Pat indicated that they listed in various documents but the point of the question was, is Goal 1 still important. Most members indicated they didn't have questions and would address them later with the Program Assessment Team as they arose.

Janet Sternburg had a general question regarding the LTRM involvement with HREP monitoring - was that responsibility of LTRM? Tom Boland indicated some states and some non-LTRMP people involved, but officially corps had responsibility to carryout this work outside of LTRM funding. Marvin Hubbell confirmed that is how they are operating now.

Janet also asked for clarification about question III-7 - How would you envision such work (HREP investigations) be accomplished outside of LTRMP funding? It is outside now? (What was the response?)

No other questions of the survey were discussed. Agencies reported their progress at completing the survey. UMSEC has asked Principal Investigators for different program scenarios and this will be reported to LTRM management for consideration. Marvin also indicated he would provide a consolidation of responses that he receives from Corps biologist and program managers. Janet suggested the Corps consider getting input from the regulatory staff too. Marvin agreed that would be a good idea.

Status and Trends work in FY

The Scope of Work indicates at outline of the report will be completed by September. John Sullivan suggested the draft outline be circulated to A-Team members for their input. Barry Johnson said this effort has started yet but will consider this recommendation. John asked that if additional money came into the program "by some miracle", would it go towards funding the Status Trends work or some other analyses? Barry couldn't say but knew EMPCC endorsed USGS recommendation that "additional funding" be applied to more analyses.

Agency Reports

MN- Kevin Stauffer indicated they completed the Asian Carp Feasibility Study and it's on their website. They are going through yet another reorganization.

IL- Rob Maher said they are in reorganization too. Probably won't affect A-Team or EMP, but a lot still up in the air. Asian carp still a big issue. They are tagging Shovelnose sturgeon and paddlefish.

Corps- Marvin Hubbell indicated they are anticipating 4 million-dollar shortfall within the Rock Island District. He suspects other districts may have similar problems. Looking for volunteer time reductions, travel reductions and other cost saving measures. He mentioned they are looking at how HREP performance project reviews are being completed. They are trying to revamp how HREP reviews fit into adaptive management. Formalize it more. He also asked about the status of EMAP.

Barry Johnson indicated they have provided all budgets and proposals to EPA EMAP staff. EPA is reviewing it now.

USEPA - Pete Redmon indicated that from his perspective the EMAP proposal is on track and they want to get this funded. He indicated Region 5 had a large salary shortfall coming this year. They will not have summer help and are seeking voluntary time off.

IA - Tom Boland said they have serious financial constraints as well. They are seeking early retirements and Tom indicated he has received an early-out offer. John Sullivan said we hate to see you go and others echoed it.

MO - (Terry can you decipher this?) Janet Sternburg said that contrary to the trend of reducing agency staff in other states, Missouri still is building staff. Valerie Barko had updated her that no new people would be hired at their field station per say, but they had just put on 2 term biologists and one of them would be doing LTRMP data collection. The University of Missouri field station is hiring a wetlands and forest ecologist that will also be under Bob Hrabik's supervision. Applications are due April 23rd, and the hires will not take place until May. Missouri's other field stations are also advertising for a number of positions. They were holding them vacant, but just within the last month they put out new announcements.

Speaking as an EMPCC representative, Janet Sternburg also reported that Gretchen Benjamin (WDNR) and Don Holtman (USFWS) were pulling together an outreach strategy for EMP to get word out to the general public to relay the importance of EMP and LTRM to the right congressmen at the right time of year, which hopefully will help to get full money and align Congressional support. This will be completed within the next couple months—EMPCC can share with the A-team and all partners to increase awareness of program.

WI - John Sullivan reported that reorganization strategies are being considered consistent with other states. Terry Dukerschein indicated the field station has moved into the West Campus at UMESC. She also reported that the position Terry Moe vacated as Team Leader of the Mississippi River Team has been approved to be filled and would be announced later this spring or in early summer.

USFWS - Tim Yager indicated they have budget concerns for FY05 & 06. They are busy with the Comprehensive Conservation Plan. Travel restrictions are in place.

Agencies Use of LTRM data

Barry Johnson reminded the A-Team that Leslie has requested this information. John Sullivan indicated they had provided a draft response. A-Team members were aware of this request and will prepare a response. This will be separate to the partnership survey response. John asked that all members share their response with other A-Team members.

Next Meeting

We have scheduled a tentative conference call for July 27th at 1 p.m. If a face-to face meeting is warranted, we plan on scheduling the following day, July 28, 2004 - probably Rock Island. John indicated final plans for the call/meeting would be made in early July.

Respectfully submitted,

Terry Dukerschein

A-Team Conference Call Attendance - April 19, 2004

A-Team

John Sullivan, WDNR
Tom Boland, IDNR
Janet Sternburg, MODOC
Walter Redmon, USEPA
Kevin Stauffer, MNDNR
Tim Yager, USFWS
Rob Maher, ILDNR
Marvin Hubbell USCOE
Pat Heglund, UMESC
Linda Ott (for Linda. Leake) UMESC
Barry Johnson, UMESC

Field Stations

Terry Dukerschein, WDNR
Valerie Barko, MODOC
Mark Pegg, ILNHS
Mike Steuck, IDNR
Walt Popp, MNDNR

Other

Rick Frietsche, USFWS