

A-Team Meeting 4.20.2022

Chairperson: Scott Gritters Iowa DNR

Final Minutes

Attendance

A-Team Reps:

Scott Gritters (Chair and IA Rep)
Nick Schlessler (MN Rep)
Shawn Giblin (WI Rep)
Matt O'Hara (IL Rep)
Matt Vitello (MO Rep)
Steve Winter (USFWS Rep)

USGS:

Jeff Houser
Jennie Sauer
Jennifer Dieck
Kristen Bouska
Jayme Strange

Mark Gaikowski

USACE:

Karen Hagerty
Marshall Plumley
Davi Michl
Eric Hanson
Lane Richter
Brian Chewning

UMRBA:

Andrew Stephenson

MN:

Eric Lund

WI:

IA:

Dave Bierman
Randy Schultz
Seth Fopma

IL:

John Chick
Jim Lamer

MO:


Dave Herzog

USFWS:


Neal Jackson

UMRR Update - Marshall Plumley


For the May quarterly meeting will be planning for in-person for first time in 2.5 years. There will be hybrid format for those that cannot attend or still do not want to do in person meetings.



UPPER MISSISSIPPI RIVER RESTORATION PROGRAM



<p>Partner Engagements: UMRR CC 25 May St. Louis</p> <p>Execution:</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%;"><tr><td>• FY 22 Program - \$33,170,000/\$15,055,611</td><td style="text-align: right;">45.4%</td></tr><tr><td>• UMRR Regional Program - \$3,875,000/\$1,098,424</td><td style="text-align: right;">28.3%</td></tr><tr><td>• UMRR LTRM - \$8,800,000/\$6,465,895</td><td style="text-align: right;">73.3%</td></tr><tr><td>• UMRR MVP HREP - \$6,718,000/\$1,052,919</td><td style="text-align: right;">15.7%</td></tr><tr><td>• UMRR MVR HREP - \$7,502,000/\$2,150,421</td><td style="text-align: right;">28.7%</td></tr><tr><td>• UMRR MVS HREP - \$7,525,000/\$4,287,951</td><td style="text-align: right;">57.0%</td></tr></table>	• FY 22 Program - \$33,170,000/\$15,055,611	45.4%	• UMRR Regional Program - \$3,875,000/\$1,098,424	28.3%	• UMRR LTRM - \$8,800,000/\$6,465,895	73.3%	• UMRR MVP HREP - \$6,718,000/\$1,052,919	15.7%	• UMRR MVR HREP - \$7,502,000/\$2,150,421	28.7%	• UMRR MVS HREP - \$7,525,000/\$4,287,951	57.0%	<p>HREP Design/Construction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Harpers Slough (MVP) – Earth Day Dedication event• Conway Lake (MVP) – Earth Day Dedication event• McGregor Lake (MVP) – Final review of Stage II (late April)• Steamboat Island (MVR) Stage I – Preparing for advertisement• Keithsburg Division (MVR) – Stage IIA – Contractor has cleared all trees (Photos). Real estate acquisition ongoing.• Clarence Cannon Berm Setback (MVS) – Contractor remobilizing• Piasa & Eagles Nest Islands (MVS) – Stage I Construction On-going
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<p>HREP Feasibility:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reno Bottoms (MVP) – CE/ICA and TSP selection• Quincy Bay (MVR) – Measures workshop held on 15 Mar• Pool 12 Forestry (MVR) – Planning workshop is scheduled for April 25th to work on measures• Lower Pool 13 (MVR) – TSP IPR with MVD is scheduled for 2 May.• West Alton Islands (MVS) – Alternatives IPR with MVD scheduled for 21 May.	<p>LTRM:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• UMRR LTRM strategic implementation planning – to identify highest priority information/science & actions<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Biweekly team meetings underway• UMRR science meeting outcomes<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 13 proposals submitted• Agency ranking underway (18 April USACE)• A-Team ranking 20 April• UMRR CC endorsement sought 24 May												



Upper Mississippi River Restoration
Leading. Innovating. Partnering.

For WRDA 2020, the UMRR authorization increased from \$33 to \$55M. The FY23 Pres Budget was released a month ago and it included UMRR for \$55M. Congress still has to weigh in but that is a great sign and shows great vote of confidence for the work you all do and all who contribute to the program. Thinking about \$55M program is a bit scary, but very exciting. Part of reason we initiated LTRM implementation planning was to be prepared for opportunities that may come our way if they do. We've taken a step toward that with the Pres budget and have started those conversations. Put us in a great position to execute those dollars if they show up. That recognition by the administration is a reflection of what you all do every day to support the program. We get the recognition because we get the work done and appreciate everyone's efforts on that.

For HREP feasibility, the Reno Bottoms project and Lower Pool 13 project are getting close to TSP. Quincy Bay has had a lot of local and political interest. A good workshop was conducted in mid-March

with sponsors and partners to make good progress identifying features. Next Monday the team will be holding an in-person planning workshop for Pool 12 forestry. This is the first large pool-scale HREP and the team is excited to address it.

On the construction side, Harpers Slough and Conway Lake project are nearing completion and will be celebrating this with an event on Friday. MVR is moving toward contract award on Steamboat Island. Keithsburg is making progress in construction and working on real estate acquisition that would allow additional work. Piasa and Eagles Nest has ongoing construction.

Looking into the future, we have put forward everything from \$33-55M spread across HREP and LTRM. Hopefully we'll know in the next 30 days if those packages will receive additional funding. Still a possibility we may see additional dollars for this year in FY22.

Karen Hagerty: LTRM implementation planning group had had two meetings under our belts with the next meeting scheduled for May 5. Working on our opportunity statement (with more money), to tighten that up and starting to ID information needs that might help us to understand the river ecosystem better or improve management and restoration of the river. The process is going very well despite being virtual. Today, we're talking FY22 science proposals. Following this meeting, the USACE, USGS, and Scott Gritters (A-Team Chair) will meet to discuss final rankings. We will be asking the UMRR CC for endorsement of science proposals at May Quarterly Meeting.

Shawn Giblin: When is LTRM implementation planning group going to circle back with the A-team? Is this month's out?

Karen Hagerty: Haven't discussed that much, but could do that at the next A-Team meeting.

Jennie Sauer: LTRM implementation planning team members are responsible for keeping agency colleagues informed as well.

Karen Hagerty: For the week leading up to Earth Day the COE put together a social media campaign again. If you're on Facebook, please share those posts.

MP: The first social media post that went out has a great video on the history of the program. MVP will be hosting dedication for Conway Lake and Harpers Slough and this will be great to celebrate project completion, in Lansing, IA. For Keithsburg, the tree clearing completed and ACM have been fabricated and delivered.

Clarence Cannon is working on berm setback re-mobilization

UMRR CC undertook mid-point review of Strategic and Operational Plan. Put out survey to broad partnership. At the May quarterly meeting, we will have some dedicated time with the UMRR CC to go through results of survey in detail to talk about what we want to focus our energy on for FY23-25 window. Want to be strategic in energy and time we put toward those items. Will be more to hear on that over the summer.

For the RTC, we are obligated to provide a report to Congress every 6 years. The second draft of the report is out for partner review and will wrap that up this month. Once that is completed, we will send to MVD for review. There will be a few opportunities for the UMRR partnership to check in with Corps leadership before submitting it to Corps HQ later this year.

Scott Gritters: Shows exciting opportunities ahead for this program. Testament to the good work being done.

Karen Hagerty: What type of UMRR update would the A-Team like to see in the future? Is MP's presentation and slides right on or do you want to see something else?

MP: Please feel free to reach out to Karen and I about future presentations

Shawn G: Right level of detail. Doing a good job with the updates.

Scott Gritters: I can make a note of the update and we can have a discussion next meeting on level of detail. I believe as Shawn does that they are on target and truly appreciate the updates. Nice to have consolidated and updated at this meeting. It will be a challenge with all the things going on to keep everyone updated, but appreciate that input and can discuss at next A-team.

A-Team November Minutes

Scott Gritters: I am behind on our A-Team minutes. We got caught up to November 3, 2021 meeting minutes and everything is voted on and approved to that point in time. All should be on the A-team corner and the November 3rd notes are written up. I have not released them because I want to review again to remove errors. If it's okay with the other folks, I think I'll send those out over email to review. Pretty confident we captured that meeting well. I have Andrew's notes and my notes fully consolidated. Please feel free to vote no confidence in me and vote me out of the chairperson duties 😊. It has been a task to get those meeting summaries complete but will invest the time needed to get us UTD. Just wanted to take a minute to show appreciation to Andrew for his great note taking skills and Jennie and Karen's help notes to edit and pick up anything Andrew and I miss. Merging all our notes seems to be working well, just time consuming.

from Matt Vitello to everyone: 8:27 AM - nice try scott. full confidence here :)

from Matt O'Hara to everyone: 8:27 AM - Ditto from Illinois

Science Proposal Ranking Process

SG: We all know and I tried to prep everyone about the short time frame for turnaround on the proposal rankings. I know we were very busy in Iowa during ranking process as well. The short turnaround was the top comment I received and it was nearly unanimous. We need to think of ways to get faster and better with it, but no matter how it is cut, this is a very busy time of year. MN worked on them last night, our team worked on them yesterday. MO got them in this morning. As Chair, I appreciate the short notice and now is your time to vent and let it all out before we start the ranking process.

Karen Hagerty: Apologize for short time frame. Lots of efforts going on this year with RTC, implementation planning, status and trends, etc. Science meeting should happen earlier and that will help alleviate a lot of these concerns. Concerns noted and appreciated.

Matt O'Hara: We made it work, but it would be nice to have at least 2 weeks for review of proposals to organize schedules, etc. Would appreciate more time.

Scott G: Time crunch is not anyone's fault, but a victim of circumstances. We did make note that we would be under short time crunch before we started the process and warned folks, but looking back there was not anytime that was a good time. Appreciate everyone getting them in and doing the best, honest effort they could. I made notes that we need to revisit timeframe and make it longer next time.

Scott G: Now for the science proposal ranking process and my comments as chair. First of all, thanks to PIs for developing great projects. After we reviewed them yesterday, I looked at agenda and thought through the projects we just reviewed. The breadth and scope of projects is truly incredible from small to large organisms, the science is tremendous. I certainly feel like a dime rating a dollars' worth of work. The proposals often show an integration of PIs and state personal, there are many integrated partnerships shown in the proposals. I had many new words to learn in all these proposals. I'm very impressed and proud with the quality of people we have in this organization. Jeff, Jennie, Karen should be proud of all the people we have working on this. The quality and breadth of topics covered. I do not think the people who envisioned starting the program could anticipate the quality of science we have in the program today.

Jeff Houser: It's a great set of projects that reflects the depth and breadth of expertise across the program. It gets broader every time we do this. Also nice that we have a deep list of proposals – we won't be able to fund them all now, but there is a potential opportunity for additional funds in the future and I think we're well situated to capitalize on that with this deep list of proposals. Agree with all you said Scott and appreciate all the time and effort that went into these proposals. It is lots of work on a short time frame. Folks did a great job. I'm looking forward to this morning's discussion.

Karen H: Thanks to Jeff for his continued leadership. First science meeting in 2018 was a wild and crazy idea but the process has been so beneficial in so many ways. Very impressive depth of knowledge on the river.

Jennie S: (concerning the smaller attendance than was usual for A-team meeting). I told LTRM branch PIs not to join today because we would be discussing rankings and that influences the meeting numbers to some extent.

Scott G: When we rank things, it's a task. People may think there are winners and losers but that's not the case. By the nature of ranking we do have to rank some high and some low. It can hurt feelings, sure not trying to. There was not a project reviewed that couldn't produce some outstanding science work. It is just that things need to be prioritized and really hope the opportunities to fund additional work in the future will pick up some of the projects not moving forward in this process.

SG: I am going to turn the ranking process over to Nick Schlessner and want to thank Nick for the Excel sheet he created to greatly aid our ranking process. Last year, I went into his exquisitely constructed program and altered it to make it adaptable to help me rank all the Iowa scores for our various reviewers. (which did work). Nick saw this and quickly realized I had no business being an Excel programmer and adapted a far better version we all could use. I want to thank Nick for his efforts and plan to turn much of the ranking discussion over to him.

Nick Schlessner – Rankings

Nick S: Nearly everyone was on the previous meeting we did to update the ranking sheet. Everything seemed to be worked fairly well. The Corps had some issues using the macros in the rating sheet.

Something in sheet from Illinois that it did not want to import into the program. In those cases, I copied the values submitted and put into a new sheet. For other agencies that submitted a single sheet or multiple sheets to be included the program worked!

For the individual agency rankings, I was happy with the amount of comments we received from agencies. Iowa and Minnesota had quite a few. Can be a little hard to read, but it does provide a lot of context for discussion of rankings. We can refer to any agency's ranking for a project or comments at any time during the discussion today. The combined rankings have been generated.

I was programming this morning and we can review combined A-Team rankings or combined A-Team with USGS and USACE rankings. Produces A-Team rank and overall rank. A-team rank is average of A-Team agency scores.

Question from Nick? What is the final dollar amount we are dealing with here?

KH: Should be around \$1.8M, but have to wait for labor to hit before that number is final.

Nick S: So putting in that amount and ranking it steps through ranks and subtracts funding to ID projects to maximize projects under available funds.

Scott G: We could start at overall big picture. Don't want to call out anyone if projects rank low but if there are some clear breaks, those may be evident.

Nick S: the top three projects are consistent between aggregated scores. Because of the high cost of a few Macroinvertebrates and phytoplankton, it chews through the funding quick. Only get 3-4 projects in that dollar value. Same happens with 4-5, A-Team versus overall. For top 5 projects, amongst these three groups, the A-Team, Corps, and USGS are pretty unanimous agreement and would go through funding we have available.

2022 SCIENCE MEETING PROPOSALS														
Page	Proposal Title	Total Cost	Final Combined Score	USGS Score	USACE Score	A-Team AVG Score	USFWS Final Score	IA Final Score	IL Final Score	MO Final Score	MN Final Score	WI Final Score	A-Team Rank	Total Rank
WG1: Hydrology and Geomorphology														
1	Evaluating the LOCA-VIC-mizuRoute hydrology data products for scientific and management applications in the UMRS	\$372,974.00	37.15	39.33	38	34.11	39.75	32	34	31.50	34	33.40	3	1
10	Scoping and vetting new technology and methods for use in future hydrographic and topographic surveys: Strategies and recommendations for updating lidar, bathymetry, and detecting geomorphic change	\$334,502.00	32.91	31	35	32.72	38	32.50	20	35.50	34.33	36	4	5
18	Field validation of automated hydrogeomorphic classification and change mapping in the UMRS Riverscape	\$257,019.00	30.02	27.33	32	30.73	37.75	27.83	31	27	32.17	28.60	9	11
WG2: Floodplain Ecology														
26	Avian use of uncommon forest types of the UMRS: filling knowledge gaps for habitat management	\$353,604.00	32.31	33	32	31.94	41.75	26.33	32	28	35.17	28.40	6	6
49	Assessing Forest Development Processes and Pathways in Floodplain Forests along the Upper Mississippi River using Dendrochronology	\$324,490.00	33.62	34.33	34	32.54	38.25	29	30	32	35.17	30.80	5	4
WG3: Fisheries														
57	Biotic and abiotic drivers of recruitment and population growth of UMRS fishes	\$448,225.00	27.23	25.67	27	29.03	38.25	25.17	26	27	24.33	33.40	12	13
WG4: Macroinvertebrates														
64	Assessing long term changes and spatial patterns in macroinvertebrates through standardized long-term monitoring	\$687,851.00	34.40	29	35	39.21	40.30	41.17	40	39.50	35.08	39	1	3
72	Substrate stability as an indicator of abiotic habitat for the UMR benthic community	\$339,741.00	30.44	31	30	30.32	42	28.50	24	30.50	30.50	26.40	10	9
WG5: Nutrients, Phytoplankton and HABs														
80	Filling in the gaps with FLAME: Spatial patterns in water quality and cyanobacteria across connectivity gradients and flow regimes in the Lower Impounded Reach of the Upper Mississippi River	\$498,892.00	32.29	33.33	32	31.54	36.75	31.00	34	25.50	32.67	28.80	7	7
88	Putting LTRM's long-term phytoplankton archive to work to understand ecosystem transitions and improve methodological approaches	\$443,152.00	35.75	37.67	33	36.59	40.50	35.17	28	39.50	37.17	39.20	2	2

99	Quantifying Ecosystem Processes in Support of River Restoration and Nutrient Reduction: Interaction of River-Floodplain Connectivity mediated by invasive Reed Canarygrass in the Upper Mississippi River System (UMRS)	\$199,988.00	28.80	29.33	29	28.08	36.50	23.67	22	30	29.50	26.80	13	12
WGE: Water Plants and Birds														
107	Understanding the distributional potential & limits, environmental thresholds, & biogeomorphic feedbacks of wild celery	\$943,509.00	30.02	32	27	31.07	37.75	30.00	28	27	33.17	30	8	10
115	Quantifying available energy provided by several aquatic and floodplain plant communities as waterfowl forage over the past 4 decades	\$301,438.00	30.88	29.67	33	29.98	41	19.50	34	29.50	31.50	24.40	11	8
Grand Total		\$4,875,385.00												

Jeff Houser: I am amazed at how tight everything is.

Nick S: I expected there are some disparities across agencies. Even within the agency we had that in Minnesota as well. Some are critical reviewers, some less critical. We did a straight average across the agency. How did other agencies do that? Did it work fairly well?

Jennie S: When I was on our VPN logging in the macro did not work. When I was off VPN, macros worked well.

Nick S: I understand some agencies don't like macros.

Steve W: The FWS admin officer gave me instructions on workaround that is allowed in our agency to allow it to run. I could share that with others.

Nick S: If the federal folks think that would be helpful, could send that out.

Seth Fopma: The workup sheet was terrific for Iowa. Appreciate that, and scoring went well.

Nick S: I wrote program as if I would get many individual sheets back but most of you sent it in in compiled format and I need to write code to take it out of compiled ones. I copied and moved tabs over manually.

from Jennie Sauer to everyone: 8:50 AM - Love spreadsheet as is!!

from Matt O'Hara to everyone: 8:50 AM - Worked great thank you

from Matt Vitello to everyone: 8:50 AM - agree spreadsheet was amazing

Scott Gritters: I somehow was successful at modifying the spreadsheet last year and getting it to work for our staff but you really built off that and your ability to work in Excel is amazing. Seth compiled them for Iowa and didn't have any issues. This was very helpful and grateful Seth could do this while I was up spawning walleyes at Clear Lake.

from Jeff Houser to everyone: 8:51 AM - I'd just like to ask those of you who have been around awhile, how much we spent during the A team meeting getting scores from each agency and then doing the math real-time. It is difficult to overstate how much Nick's work on this has smoothed the process.

from Jeff Houser to everyone: 8:51 AM - meant "ask ... to remember"

from Karen H Hagerty to everyone: 8:52 AM - This spreadsheet has really taken us to the next level. Thanks, Nick!!

from Dave Herzog to everyone: 8:52 AM - where are the error bars?

from Dave Herzog to everyone: 8:52 AM - kidding

from Davi Michl to everyone: 8:52 AM - lol

AS: Consider reviewing A-Team rankings today with more focus. We want to approve that at the end of today.

Scott G: Wanted to think through what is needed to present to UMRR CC and I will be asking Andrew's help on that.

Nick S: Jeff, Jennie, Karen will be meeting with Scotty before the meeting will to have combined recommendation prior to UMRR CC meeting.

Karen H: We need to send them the proposals in the read ahead packet. What we'll come out from next meeting. We'll have projects we want to fund with \$1.8M we have and make sure everyone knows that should funds become available.

Nick S: that is confirmed by the larger group as our recommendations.

Jeff H: Going into that meeting, I will give brief overview of the recommended proposals in the LTRM science update and they'll get that information there as well.

Scotty G: We can go over what we'll present in that part of the UMRR CC meeting. Talking about additional opportunities past \$1.8m and if Nick is available, would be nice to have Nick run the slides. Could show how projects would affect the

AS: Additional projects could be considered along with other discussions of LTRM implementation planning.

SG: Will discuss with Jeff and Jennie and Karen how to present all the information. Andrew as well.

Nick S: Asking from A-team standpoint and larger, this brings up interesting thing that didn't happen with \$1.9M. In both sets of rankings, it ID'd cutoff that allows the hydrogeomorphic classification to be funded. It's 11 but fits in under costs. None of the higher ranks are able to be fit in with that. How do we address?

Karen: Hydrogeomorphic is building off work that is not completed yet. One thing we did after the 2020 rankings. We had almost enough funding to fund a project and we asked PIs to do options to break a project down. Could do that and see if any top projects are able to be phased.

Nick S: The quantifying ecosystem processes also fits in

Shawn G: I prefer us to remain true to rankings and approach 4th project to see if they can get under the cap if that is a hard cap. Moving one down the list up into that have to remain true to how these rank out.

Matt Vitello: I agree with Shawn. Pulling the 11th project in would give us 2 hydro projects. Considering shrinking of fourth project would bring in another

Matt O'Hara: Approach 4th project to see if they can shrink their budget to fit under available funds then, could move down the list.

Nick S: I am perfectly comfortable with that from MN. Good way to do that.

Shawn G: Seems like a sensible approach.

Steve W: It sounds good to me as well

Andrew S: If there were to be additional funds announced before May UMRR CC QM?

Scott G: W could discuss in August again the approach if additional funds are available. Could talk to PIs on projects 4, 5, 6. If there is partial work that could be done.

Nick S: The A-Team ranking should be voted on.

AS – Didn't the LOCA-VIC have multiple pathways?

Jeff H: If that's not the case, think it would've been raised.

AS: A-Team can and should vote on rankings

Nick Schlessler: There are some slight program disparities from total cost and total estimated budget. Is the total estimated budget what is supposed to be in the total cost line? I can update that quickly.

KH: If you started with spreadsheet that listed PIs, projects, and total costs.

NS: Handout says \$387K, but I used spreadsheet which is \$372,974

Jennie S: I would leave them as is. You have the ranking. If we discuss with Scotty that we only have enough for 1 and 2 then we can discuss how to proceed to confirm additional projects to do. Suggest not getting into the nitty gritty of the budgets.

Motion to endorse rankings

Nick S: Move to recommend top five A-Team ranked projects for Scott G to present to USACE and USGS.

KH: How about we endorse the whole list as ranked?

Nick S: I will amend and move we vote on the whole list as ranked and have an official A-team endorsement.

Matt V: Second endorsing the whole list as ranked.

Discussion:

Scott G: We can only fund the first three as far as we know. Do we further recommend that we fund the first three? Another proposal could be to fund 4, 5, 6, we can accept the A-Team list as is. First three would get funded, and then can look at 4, 5, 6 at a further date.

Matt O'Hara: agree with that.

from Karen H Hagerty to everyone: 9:15 AM - Jennie and I would double check the budgets too

Scott G: We will accept that the first three will get funded. Projects 4,5,6 won't get full funding, but will get discussed at UMRR management team (with A-Team chair) meeting yet to be held.

Andrew S – For this meeting, it may be endorsing the rankings in the spreadsheet. Then at the next meeting when USGS and USACE scores is when you would discuss which projects to fund specifically with logistical considerations.

Scott G : Asked for a vote to accept the A-Team rankings as presented in the spreadsheet.

Unanimous consent.

Nick S: FYI the updating funds does clean things up some. Total estimated budget does move 4th overall into the list of projects to fund. Its #5 in the A-Team rankings, spread across 4 workgroups. We're talking about 4-5 projects.

Jennie S: Once we discuss the projects we want to put forward. Marissa at USGS will go through budgets again to ensure we have budgets in order as we move forward.

Nick S: Under overview we need to adjust final project costs and click run and we'll have a new prioritized list under available funds.

Jennie S: There are some folks who are PIs or Co-PIs who keep this within the group until final decisions are made. The final decisions are made at the UMRR CC meeting.

from Jayme Strange to everyone: 9:23 AM - Will do :)

Nick S: The next step is to get final version of excel spreadsheet to Scotty G, Karen, Jeff, and Jennie and prepare for the UMRR management team meeting.

Scott G: I may want Nick at management team meeting if possible and we can work through scenarios.

Karen H: Jeff, Jennie, Scotty and I need this spreadsheet for our next discussion.

Nick S: Great! Will send it to you all. I will clean the ranking page up better for formatting before sending.

Jennie S: Tremendous work on the spreadsheet.

Nick S. The real test will be next time to see if someone else can pick it up.

from Matt O'Hara to everyone: 9:25 AM - I think Nick should be all time spreadsheet person!

from Dave Bierman - Iowa DNR to everyone: 9:29 AM - Fantastic work Nick! All future Excel questions will be directed to you.

Improving the process?

Scott G: Are there any other questions or suggestions for improving the ranking process?

Nick S: We did talk briefly about wanting to revisit some scoring criteria could be discussed for summer meeting potentially. Jeff had talked about some of that as well.

Scott G: Need to get put scoring criteria on as an agenda item maybe next few meetings. Thanks all for the great discussion and working through consensus on the approved projects. I will work with the management team (hopefully with Nick's help) and move the recommendations on to the UMRR CC.

[9:30] – Break until 9:45.

Agency Updates

AS: The Upper Mississippi River Basin Association is pleased to announce that Natalie Lenzen has started as Operations Manager. Her contact information is nlenzen@umrba.org or 651-224-2880.

Project Specialist hiring as well. Applications due Friday. Position description for those that can share - <https://umrba.org/document/umrba-project-specialist-position-description>

KH: The NESP regional program manager being advertised soon.

from Karen H Hagerty to everyone: 9:55 AM - I forgot to say that Marshall (and I) will be visiting the last 2 field stations he has yet to visit (GRFS, BRWFS)

Mark Gaikowski: The USGS was tasked in consolidated appropriations act of 2022 and provide and conduct a science forum on the Mississippi River. Hope to get more information today on how to implement that. This group will be integral to implementation of that science forum when we know specific tasks, how to conduct, and reports/due outs expected. Upper River has advantage given strong partnership and agencies participating in the river.

SG: Will consider putting that on the August agenda.

Jeff H: The status and trends report has bureau approval at this point. Text and figures are essentially done. We had a few odds and ends that came up in review that have been addressed for most of the chapters. All but three/four of chapters are at publishing folks doing page layouts for final report. We will get the rest of the chapters to them next week. Then, it is just how long page layouts will take to be completed. We will review those and then it will be ready for publication. In the home stretch. I owe this group the reconciliation document of comments and I am in process of wrapping up reconciliation documents. I appreciate your comments and they were taken seriously and incorporated as best they could. Will get them back to you soon.

KH: Are you printing hard copies?

Jeff H: Yes, we will need to make a decision on how many copies we want and will have to do that soon.

KH: Might look and see how many were printed for 2008 report for a guideline.

Jeff H: That's a starting point. Otherwise, we may just take a poll and see who wants them and how many. We'll do that soon.

Jennie S: In the past, we've provided a few copies for authors, field stations, A-Team members, UMRR CC members. We also have to get 12 copies to send to national library and others. We are working on the numbers of hard copies we'll need.

Steve Winter update for UMR Refuge: Tim Yager, Deputy refuge manager retired at end of March. Lost a lot of institutional knowledge, great coworker. He'll be out fishing quite a bit. His goal is to catch a fish in every MN state park. Sabrina Chandler is the sole management staff in the HQ refuge office. They intend to refill that vacancy and we're looking forward to getting that done. Filling in for Tim's absence is challenging.

UMWFR completed habitat management plan in 2019 and following that, we need to write inventory and monitoring plans. We're almost done with that process, and we have multiple inventories and monitoring plans for each district of the UMWFR, as well as Trempealeau National Wildlife Refuge and Driftless Area National Wildlife Refuge. The regional zone biologist is doing final tweaks before sending to regional office for signatures.

Matt Vitello: Missouri is working hard on the implementing and writing plans for the Recovering America's Wildlife Act.

Missouri would get \$21M if it passes. Building off state wildlife action plan, state forest plan, and broader conservation plans. Still filling vacancies. The Mississippi biologist positions are filled an area biologists are filled, but many vacancies still.

Dave Herzog: We have fortunate responsibility to announce three new staff for field station. Josh Abner fisheries research biologist (April 1) and he'll be active in preparing research for MRRRC. Hired Lucas Zuklic a water quality component specialist. Lucas is from S. Illinois Carbondale. John West is departing. Was able to select from previous interview process and selected Andrew Glen who will start May 16.

Lots of project leveraging with invasive carp telemetry is a big one. Looking at additional transmitters and receivers for invasive carp and will also tag native fish that move through system. Likely LTRM will capture a tagged fish in the future. Trying to leverage project that involves tagging for LTRM. Leveraging telemetry and tagging project would be good. Iowa does work with paddlefish and sturgeon and could do something similar with ID'ing how fish are impeded from river passage by L&D. With RAWA have priority plans on the landscape to inform work. Do work in lower Mississippi.

Matt O'Hara: The IL DNR rivers program is at full capacity with all positions filled. This year we will continue LTRM style sampling in out pools (adopted last year). Looks like things worked well logistically last year. Will continue and possibly expand with other gears. Added Sara Tripp as commercial fisheries biologist. Along with that a developed fisheries database and analysis program will be a great product to house and analyze our data. Fish passage science team looking forward to that project coming online. With our black carp bounty program, we had black carp in Pool 20 which is the furthest upstream black carp captures and has been added to NAIS database. They are moving up the river. Commercial fishermen do catch them so be on the lookout.

Jim Lamer has have wrapped up three-year assessment of IWW lock closure project and is receiving QA 2021 data now. Have Dr. Mike Spear in throws of analysis of that project. Expect 2-3 products out of him this year to draw inferences and understand what moratorium of vessel traffic may mean. The WQ position will be opening soon and we will be posting in the next week or so to advertise. Will have that advertised in the next week or so – advertise soon. Want overlap with Dwayne with two weeks of summer SRS and sometime in the lab as well. Evaluating WHOOSH fish passage to see if we can move native fish and possibly selectively remove undesirable fish. Did move one grass carp and Buffalo. Were at mercy of IL River Hydrograph. Looking to put structure in floating platform to better control across river levels and make it mobile if needed.

Karen H: Was that black carp collected in Pool 20 diploid or triploid?

Matt O'Hara: Can get back to you on that.

from Dave Herzog to everyone: 10:13 AM

IDs: BLCP030122-001

Location: Mississippi River, Pool 20

Coordinates: 40.37715, -91.41745

Collector: Charlie Gilpin

Reporting agency: IL River Biological Station, Zack Witzel

Date of capture: 3/1/2022

Water temperature: 34 F

TL: 850 mm

FL: 785 mm

Weight: 6.88 kg

Girth: 468 mm

Ploidy: Diploid

Gear: Gill net, 3 ¾" mesh clear, pounding

Habitat: Wing dike

Depth: 14'

Sex: Female

Black carp Comments:

Scott Gritters: Our Guttenberg station especially Kevin Hanson is working with mudpuppies collecting numerous specimens and has expanded our knowledge of mudpuppies a lot in MR. He is now doing some similar work and seeing if it can be adapted to some inland river locations, He is also designing and testing some habitat structures with some initial success. For me the Mussel blitz will be the week of August 15. We will work out of Dubuque County, then on to the Cedar River, Blackhawk County, and then Washington County on the Skunk River. Will move around for this blitz, looking for rare mussels. First week of May is the sturgeon rodeo on Cedar River. Our research crew tags < 1500 shovelnose sturgeon each year. Ryan Hupfeld is trying to figure out how old these sturgeons are and appear to be quite a bit older than we thought. He is also trying to determine how often these sturgeons return to spawn in our rivers. Our Fairport crew is knee deep in hatchery work and presently hatching walleye and pike. Doing preliminary investigations on raising mussels at that station. In other business our staff is working on lots of Sovereign Lands permits as we have major bridges going out in state including the Blackhawk Bridge in Lansing, the I-74 bridge replacement and removing old bridge. Now the I-80 bridge discussions and permit work are starting. In general, we deal with the impacts of construction on the UMR and there is a lot of construction work on the river. Three stations have been meeting regularly on spill and kills in MR. The Iowa DNR has worked with partners on numerous spills and kills in the last 10 years and have been innovative in how we charge people who spill and kill on the river. We seek restitution on a variety of subject such as lost recreational value, mussel kills, fish kills, and loss of public parking ability. Trying to build working knowledge of how we have gone after major spills and kills on the river. Finally, at Bellevue we just went through a week long process called 5S, and purged the office of items no longer used and sensitive data. We have gone through all files so probably not going to be able to find anything. Trying to get rid of things we don't need. Formal purge process. Mussel blitz will occur the week of August 15th this year, preliminarily looking at sites on Lytles Creek in Dubuque County as well as the Cedar River near Palisades State Park and finally a site or two on the Skunk River in Washington County.

Dave Bierman: Approaching 9 months of full staffing. Seth and Ashley have settled in nicely. Ramping up for upcoming field season and have two seasonal workers who started April 1. We will add some more soon. Good status quo right now.

SG: Survived an impressive turnover in staff is not something we have in the Iowa DNR often. Seth and Ashley will work out great. Seth already was a major contributor to the ranking process and filled in nicely when I was gone up at Clear Lake.

Shawn G: Wisconsin has lots of work is focused on statewide initiatives such as the statewide nitrogen workgroup that has wrapped up recommendations. One focused on reductions and nitrogen standards and criteria. Another group focused on chloride reduction. TSS standards for WI streams and rivers will focus on exploring standards and criteria for future. Recently had a manuscript accepted on cyanobacteria and recommendations for managing the river.

Second year of sampling backwater residence time and initial phases of analyzing that data. Will be some recommendations for HREPs there.

PFAS is a big thing. Have been doing baseline monitoring in WI and did a focused fish tissue study. Pool 8 contamination may come from La Crosse airport from firefighting foam.

Second year of study on neonic pesticide use with one more year of data collection for that.

Field stations – Jim Fischer and group are hiring field station supervisor at La Crosse.

Nick S: In Minnesota, Devin Oliver has taken river research position which was occupied by John Hocksmeyer. John has moved up to be supervisor. Have project going on over next few years which is funded by nongame initiatives in MN and is focusing on longnose gar, shortnose gar, river red horse, and paddlefish. Project will look at demographics, recruitment, and status of populations. Working from P8 and up. First year is scoping work.

Still waiting on habitat position finalization, replacing Dan Dieterman position. We have recommendation out, but haven't gotten confirmation on who will get that. Earlier stages of Mississippi River coordinator. The project description is written but waiting for final approval before posting. Hope it will be in the next month or so.

Have not replaced Megan Moore on UMRR CC as she took promotion in MN. Redistributed most of her responsibilities. That is something that would possibly go to MR coordinator once hired.

Assisted with MUM this spring by targeting invasive carp in Pool 8. Had to cut one day short because of weather... snowy and rainy most of the week. In total, captured 6 silver over 4 days. Also we pulled a net through backwater that had lots of dead shad on the bottom.

Minnesota COVID update: As of April 22nd we are officially going to be open to public in offices. That is back in office date for those who have not set up separate work at home agreement with supervisors. Should be back to operating normally under most circumstances. Working on first in-person meeting (large lake meeting in June) and will be first in-person statewide meeting we've held in 2.5 years.

As for sampling we will be starting 57th year of annual data collection for Lake Pepin. I have been coordinating with Kristen Bouska to evaluate some vital rates findings using large lake data here.

Neal Jackson: The UMRCC is developing new website. Working with Tech Section chairs to get content for updating website. Have made good progress and looking forward to in the next month or two to get product out.

After that I am working to develop a directory. Folks are interested in that. Our new website development will include directory function to more easily provide that information to folks. I will be asking folks to help update that information. Will appreciate help updating that. Was nice to see folks who attended the UMRCC meeting in Missouri. Great meeting, looking forward to more in the future.

SG: I can tell you are being the UMRCC mussel chairperson the UMRCC was well done. Congrats Missouri and UMRCC

Nick S: Compendiums were distributed at the UMRCC. If any rep hasn't seen those or knows their office needs a copy, someone in your state should have one now.

SG: Fish compendium outstanding resource. Use it every day and is very useful when public asked such questions as "how old is that fish".

Neal Jackson - digital version of compendium is here:

https://www.umrcc.org/files/ugd/d70a05_9f518910a2fe439fbb10e9a5ef63d1ab.pdf

Matt O'Hara: July 22 in Havana –

Jim Lamer: Wanted to mention he 50th anniversary of river lab which will be open to anyone who has been employed at Forbes, river research lab, etc. Plan to meet on river front – have music, etc. Getting folks together to share some stories.

Future of getting back together

SG: continue with in-person or do hybrid? I think the next meeting will be virtual.

Steve W: Liked when we were able to piggyback on other meetings that were occurring we did that with MRRC.

SG: Yes, that worked well in the past for those who attended.

from Karen H Hagerty to everyone: 10:36 AM - historically, in person in Fall and April w/MRRC. summer and winter were virtual

Nick: When easy meeting to piggyback on good for in-person, but this meeting type is pretty well suited to the virtual format as well and has worked well. When opportunities arise think we should take advantage of piggybacking onto other meetings. Adds to lodging costs, but cuts down on travel costs.

KH: Also have had A-Team in conjunction with Fish Tech in the past.

Neal Jackson: The expectation is that we're scoping an Itasca UMRCC meeting this fall to include fish and wildlife tech sections. Revisiting if that is possible this year. Typically, that would occur in September – if getting back to pre-COVID scheduling format.

from Jim Lamer to everyone: 10:39 AM

50th anniversary: A flyer for the event is attached, and a brief field station history can be found here <https://illinois-river-bio-station.inhs.illinois.edu/about/history/>

SG – please send any additional agency updates. Covered a lot of ground today! Appreciate Nick and Seth’s help last week. Appreciate Matt adjusting his schedule to meet it.

Adjourned at 10:41 a.m.

CHAT

from Matt Vitello to everyone: 8:27 AM

nice try scott. full confidence here :)

from Matt O'Hara to everyone: 8:27 AM

Ditto from Illinois

from Karen H Hagerty to everyone: 8:31 AM

Could the call in number please put your name and agency in the cat? thanks!

from Karen H Hagerty to everyone: 8:31 AM

in the chat

from Jeff Houser to everyone: 8:31 AM

call in is the UMESC conference phone. Jennie and I are there.

from Karen H Hagerty to everyone: 8:31 AM

thanks!

from Jayme Strange to everyone: 8:42 AM

This is impressive! Nice work on this spreadsheet.

from Dave Bierman - Iowa DNR to everyone: 8:45 AM

Can we see them all at once Nick?

from Dave Herzog to everyone: 8:47 AM

better check the math :)

from Karen H Hagerty to everyone: 8:47 AM

Nick, can you send out the spreadsheet when the meeting is over?

from Jeff Houser to everyone: 8:49 AM

macros >> formulas

from Jennie Sauer to everyone: 8:50 AM

Love spreadsheet as is!!

from Matt O'Hara to everyone: 8:50 AM

Worked great thank you

from Matt Vitello to everyone: 8:50 AM

agree spreadsheet was amazing

from Jeff Houser to everyone: 8:51 AM

I'd just like to ask those of you who have been around awhile, how much we spent during the A team meeting getting scores from each agency and then doing the math real-time. It is difficult to overstate how much Nick's work on this has smoothed the process.

from Jeff Houser to everyone: 8:51 AM

meant "ask ... to remember"

from Karen H Hagerty to everyone: 8:52 AM

This spreadsheet has really taken us to the next level. Thanks, Nick!!

from Dave Herzog to everyone: 8:52 AM

where are the error bars?

from Dave Herzog to everyone: 8:52 AM

kiidding

from Davi Michl to everyone: 8:52 AM

lol

from Jeff Houser to everyone: 8:56 AM

that is correct

from Karen H Hagerty to everyone: 9:08 AM

you should vote to confirm the A-Team rank and endorse the final

from Karen H Hagerty to everyone: 9:09 AM

If you endorse the final ranking, would the A-Team need to vote on any subsequent funded projects?

from Karen H Hagerty to everyone: 9:15 AM

Jennie and I would double check the budgets too

from Jayme Strange to everyone: 9:23 AM

Will do :)

from Matt O'Hara to everyone: 9:25 AM

I think Nick should be all time spreadsheet person!

from Karen H Hagerty to everyone: 9:29 AM

break until 9:45

from Dave Bierman - Iowa DNR to everyone: 9:29 AM

Fantastic work Nick! All future Excel questions will be directed to you.

from Upper Mississippi River Basin Association to everyone: 9:50 AM

The Upper Mississippi River Basin Association is pleased to announce that Natalie Lenzen has started as Operations Manager. Her contact information is nlenzen@umrba.org or 651-224-2880.

from Karen H Hagerty to everyone: 9:55 AM

I forgot to say that Marshall (and I) will be visiting the last 2 field stations he has yet to visit (GRFS, BRWFS)

from Jeff Houser to everyone: 10:04 AM

Dave -- can you put the names of the new folks in the chat?

from Dave Herzog to everyone: 10:07 AM

zuklic

from Upper Mississippi River Basin Association to everyone: 10:07 AM

Position description for those that can share - <https://umrba.org/document/umrba-project-specialist-position-description>

from Dave Herzog to everyone: 10:13 AM

IDs: BLCP030122-001

Location: Mississippi River, Pool 20

Coordinates: 40.37715, -91.41745

Collector: Charlie Gilpin

Reporting agency: IL River Biological Station, Zack Witzel

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Ploidy: Diploid

Gear: Gill net, 3 ¾" mesh clear, pounding

Habitat: Wing dike

Depth: 14'

Sex: Female

Black carp Comments:

from Karen H Hagerty to everyone: 10:14 AM

thanks Dave

from Matt O'Hara to everyone: 10:15 AM

Diploids Karen

from Seth Fopma to everyone: 10:20 AM

Nothing from me, glad to be part of the group!

from Dave Herzog to everyone: 10:21 AM

Josh Abner --fisheries Research Biologist Luke Zuklic--LTRM WQ component Andrew Glen--LTRM
fish component

from Neal Jackson to everyone: 10:32 AM

I did bring home a few extras of the compendium, so please let me know if you do not have a hard copy and you want one.

to Neal Jackson (privately): 10:33 AM

Hi Neal, I think UMRBA would be interested in a copy.

from Neal Jackson (privately): 10:34 AM

Got it. I'll set one aside (may have a chance to ship it soon, if not, I'll bring to a meeting later this year).

to Neal Jackson (privately): 10:34 AM

Thanks!

from Neal Jackson to everyone: 10:34 AM

Digital version of compendium is here:

https://www.umrcc.org/_files/ugd/d70a05_9f518910a2fe439fbb10e9a5ef63d1ab.pdf

to Neal Jackson (privately): 10:35 AM

Oh, we might be okay with the digital version too... Thanks for sharing that link! We'd probably welcome a print version though too!

from Karen H Hagerty to everyone: 10:36 AM

historically, in person in Fall and April w/MRRC. summer and winter were virtual

from Jim Lamer to everyone: 10:39 AM

50th anniversary: A flyer for the event is attached, and a brief field station history can be found here <https://illinois-river-bio-station.inhs.illinois.edu/about/history/>

from Matt O'Hara to everyone: 10:41 AM

only for you scotty!

from Davi Michl to everyone: 10:41 AM

Thanks, Scotty!

from Jeff Houser to everyone: 10:41 AM

thanks all!

from Matt Vitello to everyone: 10:41 AM

thanks

from Jim Lamer to everyone: 10:41 AM

thanks!

ADDENDUM

The UMRR LTRM management team (Houser, Sauer, Hagerty) met with the A-Team Chair (Gritters, with Schlessler assisting) to have a final discussion of the FY2022 UMRR science proposals. Four proposals were selected for funding (hydrology, phytoplankton, macroinvertebrates, and dendrochronology). To be able to fund all four projects, the funding for the contaminant portion of the macroinvertebrate proposal will be delayed until early FY23 (approximately 6-month funding delay). Delayed funding will have no effect on the timeline of the contaminant work as stated in the proposal. In addition, the delay will allow the macroinvertebrate team to address the comments from the proposal review. Additionally, the 5th highest ranked proposal (hydroacoustic methods update) will be referred to the LTRM Spatial Component for methods refinement so that it could be ready for funding in FY23, if appropriate.