

**A-Team Conference Call Minutes**  
**26 August 2013**

**Attendees:**

Nick S., Walt Popp, Jim Fischer, Sara Strassman, Scott Gritters, Dave Bierman, Rob Cosgriff, John Chick, Quentin Phelps, Dave Herzog, Janet Sternburg, Steve Winter, Barry Johnson, Mike Jawson, Jennifer Dieck, Jeff Houser, Jennie Sauer, Jim Rogala, Brian Ickes, JC Nelson, Brian Gray, Kat McCain, David Potter, Derek Ingvalson, Karen Hagerty, Marvin Hubbell, Ken Barr, Chuck Theiling, Mike Dougherty.

**Approval of the Minutes** from the April 24, 2013 meeting in La Crosse, WI. Tabled until next meeting to make following changes:

- Update attendance list
- FY13 budget update: “The ASA has decided to accelerate construction funding on 3 HREP projects.” Delete “from funds that were...”
- FY14 budget update: accelerate construction funding and construction jobs, Marv will provide more clarity.
- Theresa Newton is Teresa, no “h”

**FY 14 Budget Update**

- FY13: \$17M plan, actually \$24.131M with difference going to accelerate construction funding on 3 HREP
- FY14: \$32M Pres., Senate agreed, House \$30.3M. However, probably will be in continuing resolution for FY14. Hubbell is estimating CR will operate at \$24M. Jawson questioned if under CR, budget will jump back to FY12 amount. M. Hubbell has not received that guidance
- \$5.225 for base monitoring, about \$1M for additional science funds which includes proposals, equipment, LCU processing, and LiDAR processing.
- Hubbell: if we go back to historical 1/3:2/3 split, UMRR will drop down to \$17M or less.
- Maher: OK for now; but not sustainable and does not allow growth
- Chick: Is \$1M for science needs limited to \$1M? Hubbell: not limited; but that is the target.
- Overall, all partners expressed concern with move away from traditional 2/3:1/3 split in terms of what it means for a commitment to science in the program.
- Sauer & Strassman made requests to see the draft budget (or at least accompanying narrative) that the Corps sends to HQ so that partners can contribute to the characterization of science needs and offer clarifying language. Hubbell indicated that the budget must be kept internal at Corps due to sensitivities.
- Strassman had also mentioned that it seemed that elements such as LC/LU should be part of a base program budget, as they are critical science elements. Marv explained that LC/LU was taken out of the base (capped at \$5.2M) to be sure to adequately support the LTRMP monitoring elements (primarily staff).

**Strategic Planning Update:**

- Looked at issue papers
- 5 major areas
  1. Vision/Mission/Guiding Principles
  2. LTRMP issues
  3. HREP issues

4. Leveraging
5. Maintain functionality of Partnership

### Critical Questions

- See email from Johnson Tue 8/13/2013 for composite ranks and questions
- Many questions overlap.
- Addressing Johnson's 3 questions:
  1. Understanding agency ranks for issues that were highly variable (>1 std dev)
    - a. Invasive species. Sternburg 0-3, looking for more clarity. Topic could overwhelm program. Pull zero off of table. Johnson: not do C? if framework evolves Hagerty answered that an invasive spp framework (in proposal) would help determine the appropriate balance for EMP
    - b. Trib. floodplain restoration. Maher work outside of purview of UMRR. Need clarification on definition of "trib. floodplain". Concentrated at deltas and where floodplains merge
    - c. Wildlife: Maher no components outside of current abilities (Cost related). Winter: cooperative work, an example is using muskrats as an ecological indicator of marsh community. Need to know what others are doing.
    - d. Fishing regulations: Winter states in CCP and of high interest to USFWS
    - e. Contaminants and pollutants: data gaps to decide if these are important to us or not
  2. Determining if there are geographic differences
    - a. Backwater dredging, side channels, channel maintenance, wing dikes
    - b. Johnson will email out table showing geographic differences
  3. Can narrow the focus of some issues
    - a. Sediments
    - b. Hydro-dynamics: covers several critical questions
    - c. Loss of floodplain
    - d. Primary production
    - e. Relation of habitat
- Strassman: is development of a conceptual framework possible? Barry was planning to work on narrowing the focus of these specific issues and laying out a conceptual framework for the EMP-CC mtg in November. Also, it was raised that folks' scores of the critical science questions may be biased by concerns over limited funds and prospective trade-offs.

### FY 14 SOW Development

- What is A-Teams role? Hubbell: Highlight base, define if anything notable, look at magnitude of effort
- Sternburg: Confusion of July 12 email from Hubbell. Really need to layout process, know who is talking to whom, difficult to know what is taking place. Fischer: Confusion of July 12 email from Hubbell, bad timing right during field season, did not realize Corps was looking for additional topics, rushed process
- Jawson: disappointed we have gone back to APE process, abandoned focal areas. Process not following strategic plan. Was hoping for an invitation process vs. requests. Only have RFPs for more directed work
- Why was LCU taken out of Base? Hubbell's decision to give Base funding a boost
- Strassman: Is it the role of the A-Team to address that \$5.2M does not meet needs? Maher agrees. Base should be LT monitoring and mission critical science, not what fits under \$5.2M
- Confusion on what is being proposed for "Under base" versus "additional dollars, why two lists?"

- Jawson suggests that those proposing Asian carp work look at the Federal Asian carp framework to see where cooperation and coordination can be done. Jawson will send out link to framework
- Priority Items that will be funded to some extent: LiDAR processing, LCU processing, Field Equipment, Science Planning Meeting
- Very brief discussion on proposals
  - Hydrodynamic modeling-included conversation about the benefits of this proposal for feeding into an EIS for channel training structures at the Corps
  - Science planning meeting: directed as base
- MO: 4 proposals missing from packet—Striped mullet, *Macrhybopsis* chub, SC/MC comparison, recruitment patterns in fish
- Ranking for next time will select those that will go forward to full proposal. Sauer: need to be very clear to PIs what is missing from the proposals if they are asked for full-proposal
- There was additional dialogue about the Corps' Science Delivery Team and their efforts to identify what science is needed at Corps to meet project specific needs—there was a suggestion that this list of science needs first be sent through USGS to let LTRMP experts help assess what things the program already offers, what work might fit under current base, how the science to answer those needs could be structured
- Hagerty will send out consolidated list. Agency rankings to Maher by Sept. 17

#### **Waterbird Mortality Research Issues involving the Invasive Snail *Bithynia tentaculata***

- Looking for partner-vetted document
- No time to discuss on call, put on agenda for next A-Team

#### **Time and Place for October face to face**

- Possibly Quad Cities, piggy back on Strategic Plan meeting