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## **A-Team Conference Call Summary—March 22, 2006**

**Present:** Bill Franz, EPA; Mike Jawson, Jennie Sauer, Larry Robinson, Jeff Hauser, Pat Heglund, Barry Johnson, Brian Ickes USGS; Rob Maher ILDNR; Dan Kirby and Kirk Hansen IADNR; Jim Fischer and Terry Dukerschien WDNR; Walt Popp WDNR, Marvin Hubbell, Karen Hagerty, Nicole McVay and T. Miller USACOE

**Absent:** NRCS, USFWS, AND Kevin Stauffer, MN DNR

1. **List of APE focus areas discussion.** Is any topic missing? No responses.
2. **What needs to be fleshed out:** 4 generic items need clarification, Marv Hubbell said.
  - a. **Clarification on continuing APES.** Some APES from last year were designed to continue. We would like to receive FOLLOW UP proposals. Evaluation of whether or not to continue the APE will be based on completion or the work this year and the credibility of the effort. Jeff Hauser brought up that many of these projects have a Sept. 30 deadline and we'll be evaluating APES before that. Hubbell answered that continuing projects could be put into inserted into the 3-tier priority scheme we used last year and actually evaluated when the funding comes in, which is after Sept. 30 usually anyway. There would typically be enough time for report submittal and evaluation. Timeline: The Call for Proposals will be in early April—that gives 3-4 weeks for them to come in. We will have titles and summaries for the April meeting.
  - b. **All proposals need to explicitly address anticipated use or outcome of the work being proposed**—provide a clear idea of the application of their proposal—what it will do. Be focused and explicit about how it ties back to the monitoring program or towards basic understanding of how the ecosystem functions.
  - c. **Should cross component analysis and linkage between HREPs and LTRM—be separate themes or integrated into evaluation criteria for all themes?** These two things will be important criteria to address in evaluation of proposals. Jennie Sauer brought up that HREP linkage is too local and narrow as to use in evaluation of systemic criteria. Pat Heglund brought up importance of systemic level evaluation, not local projects. Marvin Hubbell clarified that this is not linked to a specific HREP only, it just has to be connected to potential restoration issues. Rob Maher said monitoring program should pick up changes from HREPS. Pat Heglund said she still had concerns—design of sampling was not to detect effects of HREPS—there would be damping due to scale issues. Karen brought up that signals picked up might not be directly from HREPS- it could be from the watershed or something else. John Chick said if the ultimate goal was to have more projects evaluating restoration, HREP linkage should be

a theme, not an evaluation criteria. Group consensus was that cross-component analysis would be a criteria and HREP linkage would be a theme.

- d. **How to address specific questions managers have that they would like to see addressed.** Marvin Hubbell encouraged those putting proposals together to talk with their local managers. Rob Maher reminded the group that sometime later we need to have a workshop with managers with this goal in mind. Mike Jawson said it's a good concept to go to local managers, but the conference will be good in that discussions would be more universal and more universal questions would emerge. The group decided to incorporate the amount of direct benefit to local managers into evaluation criteria.

3. **Jennie Sauer asked if any input needed to be modified or added to the present list.** Exotics were brought up as a possible theme. Walt Popp said MN managers were concerned about exotics and agreed it should be a separate theme. Vegetation issues in the north in particular involve the issue of exotics and invasives and its worthy as a fixed theme. Nicole McVay argued that invasives are important because of the context of how they change habitat, not just by themselves. They fit well within the themes we already have. The group agreed themes will overlap, but invasives are a pressing issue with resource managers. Consensus was to designate exotics and invasives as a theme if the goal is to get good proposals on invasive species. Authors can tell how it fits under multiple themes. Walt will write up a draft invasives theme and give it to Jennie by March 24. Jennie will refine and circulate it with the rest of the document Monday of next week. Karen and Marvin will write up the theme for the HREP linkage and get it to Jennie Sauer by Friday, March 24.

4. **Dan Kirby asked what happens to a proposal that doesn't fall into any of the themes but is a good proposal?** Marvin Hubbell said we're focusing on themes to address the 3 main program goals and Karen voiced what those were: 1.) better understand the UMRS and problems, 2.) monitor and evaluate resource trends, and 3.) develop alternatives to better manage the system. There was not a specific proposal Dan had in mind, so the group decided to visit this issue later, but if we see something good, ask the authors to address it the following year. Marvin pointed out we're compromising between wide open and narrowly prescriptive to maximize chances of getting useful proposals that relate directly to one or more of the 3 program goals. Jim Fischer added that the third goal is a good reason to propose that HREPs be a separate theme.

5. **John Chick asked if there would be any filtering done before proposals are ranked by everyone?** (In case sideboards don't work) It was suggested that proposals pass through a committee to see if they fit into sideboards before going to the ranking process. Marvin suggested finding folks to volunteer for initial

screening, but the group wanted to see how the sideboards work first. Chick, Maher and Hubbell suggested that only if we get more than 35-40 proposals, set up a pre-screening subcommittee. Mike suggested asking for a title and a summary (1-2 page limit), screen if we get a lot of them, the call for a more detailed proposal on the proposals that make it through the screening. There will be no second call for proposals. Give enough lead time to develop decent pre-proposal ideas. Hopefully there is enough floating out there from previous years that we can pull projects together within short period of time. There will be 3-4 weeks to develop pre-proposals, and the goal is to have a selection of full proposals for EMPCC to rank by their August meeting. The A-Team would rank the filtered, full fledged proposals at their July meeting in a face to face meeting. USGS will work up the process.

6. **Valarie's question: Themes potentially will change year to year—any guarantee the same themes will still there in 08 if a project is put off until the next year?** Marvin Hubbell said there would be a lot of interaction before the next FY call for proposals so people would not get launched in the wrong direction. Themes will be stable for awhile but will evolve as questions get answered and new information comes to light. Barry summarized that now we have 7 themes for 2007—shall we combine or narrow them down? Marvin said themes in section (E) were fundamental limnology, but the argument was made by that there are not answers to those questions. Example: How much suspended sediments are too much? The quantitative relationship of concentrations and impacts is not well understood. What should the tmdl's be? These are real management questions, Mike Jawson pointed out. Jeff Hauser said theme E. addresses quantifying impacts on the local systems, not just in the context of delivery to the gulf. Marvin Hubbell said this discussion points out there are lots of really important scientific questions, that make sense if they can be related back to kind of work we might do for restoration. These are huge issues that need to be addressed possibly in other forums, but if we can relate them back to a restoration or other application, it gives us something we can work with. Jeff Hauser will clarify as it relates to various issues. Jim Fischer added many managers are working to establish tmdl's and setting quantitative criteria up and down the river. Bill Franz pointed out that we should get this proposal information to MN PCA and IL EPA to see what they might need on this issue.
7. **Jennie Sauer needs all additions by Friday and she'll get it out by Monday sometime.** Somone from USACE added to be sure Dan Wilcox and T. Miller are on distribution.
8. **Marvin Hubbell said he is anticipating there may be a discussion relating to implementation of MSP to the program.** At the last A-Team meeting when he asked, "Are MSP assumptions adequate?" the field station team leaders answered that EMAP-GRE is maintaining their capability. If EMAP goes away in coming years, we need to be thinking about what we need to do to support our MSP program, Hubbell said. UMESC will take the lead to make that evaluation, and it clearly will be an issue for next year. As it turned out in 2006, the money we

gained from having no Savings and Slippage (S&S) was needed due to changes in contracting procedures and also limited ability to respond because of limitations of putting additional manpower in place rapidly. This issue will be on the agenda for our April meeting. Marvin Hubbell stressed that EMP in our category of the President's Budget was designated as one of 8 national priority projects. The proposed budget is 26.8 million—down from last year's 33 million, but still above the 20 million we've historically gotten in recent years. Most are assuming after the House and Senate get done with it, it will be in the neighborhood of 20 million, also assuming no S&S in 2007 but maybe a small recision. Doomsday folks say Congress might adjust to 18 million w/o S&S but we have to plan that it could be above or below the 20 million. The only thing certain is uncertainty. The fact that EMP is one of 8 prominent programs is all very positive for the program.

**9. Rob Maher brought up the recurring concern about monitoring activities.**

The A-Team and Field Stations seemed comfortable with FY 2002 levels of monitoring, but those could not be sustained fiscally. There is discomfort with the resulting reductions from a biological perspective, and it has been a struggle to reincorporate some of the lost monitoring. There was strong support at EMPCC for some continued monitoring, and we need a way to incorporate additional monitoring similar to the way we accommodate bathymetry and HNA needs. Maher suggested going to each Field Station to work up budget and what would be added if additional money comes in. Kirby and Dukerschein both felt having something additional is a good idea, but that allowing the field stations to make individual decisions would result in data fragmentation that would be difficult to analyze and of limited usefulness on a systemic scale. Walt suggested the managers be the ones to decide what would be reinstated in any given year, but Terry Dukerschien said managers have special interests and agendas as well and that would also result in fragmentation and divisiveness—there needed to be strong program leadership and consensus on these issues—not individual manager or field station decisions. Marvin Hubbell asked Rob Maher if he was looking at increasing the # samples in a certain area or the number of samples for a certain monitoring component? Rob replied that 1<sup>st</sup> period fish sampling is one example where the data is used by managers in Illinois. He stressed that a placeholder is needed so that if the opportunity presents itself, we can do more monitoring.

“What would we build back in?” Karen asked—“Is a 1-yr sampling occurrence a valuable increment?” John Chick said, “Yes, if we happen to hit flood or drought missing in past, it provides good information, even if only for one year. We have the benchmark and now we can compare to it. We invested a lot to get that data in past and it's a way to keep the value of that previous investment.”

“Everything heard so far falls into special project category.” Barry Johnson said. Bits and pieces won't help much in a system-wide-scenario until we know we have a consistent pot of money we can draw from,” he added. John Chick pointed out last year that wasn't true. “We had extra money, and did bathymetry—it was easy to install. We don't have this ease for putting back monitoring efforts.”

“ All we’re talking about is putting together a plan if we come in with more money than we know what to do with. We would have to do with temporary staff,” Rob Maher added. Barry Johnson asked, “How is the idea of a particular question particular event we want to get information on any different from an APE project? It’s difficult to predict river conditions from year to year” John Chick answered. “We should have something in place--money available in May or June, possibly. How do you determine how much money is available for bathymetry (MSP+)? These are things identified as critical needs of the program,” Marvin Hubbell answered. “Bathymetry is a base for a lot of the work being done. We looked at capability of 3 crews in the districts and planned accordingly on what was possible to execute in a year.” Rob Maher asked if this could evolve along a parallel line—if we could flesh it out so a \$ value could be worked out by the end of April. Marvin said we would need to flesh out and identify actions and anticipated benefits. Any field station or state interested in participating should justify why they want to reimplement whatever they are proposing. Marvin advised the states and field stations to spend time between now and April identifying who wants what information and what it does to our ability to detect change long term in the system. The issue will be discussed at the April 26 A-Team meeting here in LaCrosse. Send thoughts to Rob Maher and be specific about how the information would be used. No budgets need at this time—within a week, we just need something to work off to see where we can go with this—what we would reimplement and why. Maintaining systemic integrity to data needs to be discussed more.

**Rob Maher will send an agenda and details for next meeting within a week or so.**

Someone asked Jennie Sauer to please include a copy of the sideboards (criteria?) with the themes she sends out and a “headline” for each theme.

**The call was adjourned at 2:30 pm.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Terry Dukerschein, WDNR**

**A-Team Meeting Minutes**  
**April 26, 2006**  
**Radisson Hotel, LaCrosse, Wisconsin**

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 am by chairperson Rob Maher.

The following were in attendance: Marvin Hubbell (USACOE), Karen Hagerty (USACOE), John Chick (INHS), Matt O'Hara (INHS), Greg Sass (INHS), T. Miller (USACOE), Walt Popp (MNDNR), Kevin Stauffer (MNDNR), Janet Sternburg (MDOC), Valerie Barko (MDOC), Jennie Sauer (USGS), Barry Johnson (USGS), Kirk Hansen (IADNR), Dan Kirby (IADNR), Jim Fisher (WIDNR), Tim Yager (USFWS), Terry Dukerschein (WIDNR), Rob Maher (ILDNR).

Minutes from both the January 24, 2006 and March 22, 2006 conference calls were approved by group consensus without additions or corrections.

\* Implementation of Minimum Sustainable Program (MSP) with current staffing levels. The concern was raised regarding whether each field stations would be able to complete the MSP without support from outside funding sources such as EMAP.

- a. John Chick, INHS Great Rivers: Since development of the MSP, we also have gotten EMAP and some APES. I think we could do it in 2007 if we had nothing but MSP, as long as MSP is fully funded. If we had to go 3-4 years with no additional funds and had no seasonal help, during that time equipment maintenance would fall behind.
- b. Matt O'Hara of INHS said their situation at the Havana Field Station mirrors what John Chick said. "We'll accomplish it, but extra money brings more capability."
- c. Walt Popp, MNDNR Lake City reported he relies a lot on seasonal help—it would be ok for now but EMAP and APES help.
- d. Valarie Barko and Janet Sternberg, MODOC, reported they are doing fine because of other outside money.
- e. Dan Kirby in Iowa said they don't generally bring in a lot of funds from other things. EMAP isn't propping them up a lot, but he said it helps with some fixed costs like rent. EMAP also pays part of his salary and that's still a hurdle—he was not sure how Iowa will handle that.
- f. Terry Dukerschein from Wisconsin DNR said her salary would also be an issue if EMAP goes away. She reported that WDNR's Water Division is undergoing a restructure which has caused a domino effect with transfer and hiring opportunities and they are waiting for that to stabilize before the field station's permanent staffing picture under MSP solidifies. She also reported that raises are ratified by unions, and some of them have step increases that were not predictable when she originally budgeted, so Wisconsin's MSP scenario could have a few developments yet. The state Legislature must vote for the salary packages before they are final.

- g. Barry Johnson, USGS, suggested that another way to bring money in is to do EMAP analyses. John Chick commented that the EMAP picture changes from year to year and that EPA has indicated to him, for example, that EMAP 2007 might be a hiccup year for field work at his field station, but it would likely be back in 08 and 09. "People willing to do analyses for free get first cut at it with EMAP," he also stated.

\* List of proposed APE projects. Jennie Sauer of USGS reported she had received 39 letters of intent proposing APE projects for 2007. UMESC solicited Letters of Intent to save PI's time for writing up only promising proposals. Timeline – The first cut should be a simple yes or no, do we want to ask researchers to go forward with a full proposal, based on their letter of intent. The USGS want a consolidated response from the A-Team. If something doesn't qualify, helpful for A-Team to explain why. Give a reasons for either Yes or No. Rob will consolidate and forward on. Format was discussed. Ones on the fence might need some explanations. Comments need to go to Rob no later than Wednesday. Rob will make a few phone calls if there is a split vote. If USGS can get responses by May 5, they would have week to prepare and review before the EMPCC meeting. Once that is done, researchers would have another month to write full proposals and resubmit them to USGS and the Corps. Rob suggested a face to face meeting in July to rank proposals. A-Team needs the full proposals a week ahead of time. Kevin Stauffer reminded the group there are more steps. Rob said we don't want a good project left behind due to misunderstandings. PI's can be called as well to ask questions to clarify, but not leading questions. Expect to provide more feedback once the full proposals have been developed. Rob asked if we should incorporate price tag into how we evaluate things. Barry said at this point it's more important to get a good idea fleshed out. Price tags will be considered later at the ranking stage. John Chick asked if it would be useful to set a maximum amount for an APE, a ceiling price. Barry said that is probably appropriate but he prefers to just get ideas out there, the good but expensive ones possibly could be funded other ways. Jennie mentioned she had received calls from folks outside LTRMP structure asking if they could submit APEs with the criteria that they need an LTRM partner on the proposal with them as a Co-PI. John Chick expressed support for that and group consensus was that those relationships need to be encouraged. Regarding monetary transfer issues, APE Monies will have to go through LTRMP partners.

Questions about the process—Marv asked to add we make sure we evaluate ability of getting it done. If APE was awarded in past, should be able to take into account whether or not it matched the schedule. UMESC makes evaluation whether current enough for researcher to finish it up. We need to efficiently use the dollars we have. To make it flexible do the evaluation on an individual basis-make sure late projects are still on track. Concerns associated with federal budgeting process were discussed. Some measure of accountability seems reasonable, but needs to be worked out with PI's. Evaluation point is end of September. Need to sit down with individual PI's to assess progress. If it is determined that 06 product can't be finished, less likely to approve FY-07 APE. If the base work is done with a report developed, a journal article is value-added. Mainly looking for a plan and status and how it will be accomplished. Milestones are what we have to go on. Whole idea is not to overburden people and not get anything get lost in



the shuffle. Internal USGS checks can be done accomplished. Marv said if continue to get same guidance, fully fund contracts and execute an APE in Feb and give 12 months from Feb to do work. Marv will look into that and find out if it is feasible administratively. The idea is to submit a 12-month budget with a flexible timeline. Identify as a 12 month effort, window is March next year to March of following year. You cannot advance or obligate until money is available. John Chick said another strong argument for a flexible calendar is we often don't know what we have it until the end of the year and time is already scheduled. A flexible timeline gets us out of the bind of trying to have product at the end of the field season we just finished. Barry asked PI's to talk to each other and see whether they can cooperate on a joint proposal. 6 Asian Carp projects. Everyone get together and develop overall framework. John Chick—ask people to explore the potential—see if it will work. Just looking for communication and if synergy can happen. Example: Eileen Kirsch is working with all the folks on the Forestry projects. Marv said not only selection process but approach and application gets added value, apply it in some way, shape or form. Opening communication is a key to have the synergism. Example: interaction between engineer and biologists on a Corps modeling project. Janet said a lot of managers don't have time to read all the reports, but short presentations where managers get together are very beneficial. Rob asked if we'd like to see technical presentations at fall A-team meetings? John Chick forwarded idea of internship program for undergrad students. They require the undergrads to give a symposium at the end of the year. Well-attended—4<sup>th</sup> year now. Wise to start a symposium every other year, APE presentation on it at symposium meeting. John about to become President of MRRC. UMRCC is another venue. John is proposing an EMAP session at MRRC. UMRCC is usually invited speakers—probably more appt. in tech session meeting. Janet current chair and Kevin chair elect. Janet did a call for papers last year. A session on some other projects like APES would also be good. A bigger session on where we are with LTRMP. We need to go to get the word out to managers through the RRAT, FWIC, etc. MN is hosting UMRCC next year. Alternate it UMRCC one year, MRRC next year. APE projects are more research oriented. Hit academics and managers both. Kevin working with tech sections—where projects best fit. Fall meetings a good idea. For the big one, it's an overview of projects. USGS talk at plenary. Inform everyone will be individual talks given at tech sessions. Simple poster would do it. This is more reasonable approach than separate LTRM workshop. EMP hasn't been able to publicize. Folks have stepped forward to promote 20<sup>th</sup> yr anniversary. Concerns were expressed regarding lack of cross-pollination if presented in tech sessions. Need to take specialist blinders off and still be in-depth. Whether through the MSP or an APE, the ultimate goal is to share knowledge we have of the system. In the past the UMRCC left up to host states to decide content of the annual meeting and to make a recommendation to them, this might be a good opportunity to incorporate a special session regarding the LTRMP and APE projects. Kevin is willing to discuss with MN folks. Get it started in tech sections. Doesn't address all various disciplines and specialties out there, but it's a start. Walt said problem with a special session—mgrs traveling Monday to ad hoc-tech sections will be departing by Thursday pm. Many will not be able to attend. Attendance might be better if this was infused into technical sessions. It was discussed whether or not to make it a requirement to present results somewhere, within 2 years of completion, at any professional society meeting. Keep it a

strong suggestion. Good presentations and dissemination of information should rank them high, however not everyone is allowed to travel out of state. Presentations somewhere in the state should also be encouraged. If it is required that you seek to give presentations, there needs to be travel monies budgeted in APES. There would be major benefits to researchers, the program, and the public. Need to require that LTRMP be cited and thanked for funding anytime LTRMP data is used, including in professional presentations. **John Chick moved that presentations of APE projects become a recognized product and also that presentations (poster or oral) at any level (state, regional national) be considered in as a positive criteria for ranking APEs. Finally in APE guidance and all APE contracts, an LTRMP/EMP acknowledgment (to be crafted later) will be stated and required for all products. Kevin Stauffer seconded and it passed unanimously.**

At 9:30 am the discussion on letters of intent concluded. Jim Fischer asked how ATEAM ranked “yes” will be handled. Would those projects be forwarded automatically? Marv said, the A-Teams input would go to Jennie, along with the Corps input. Normally project selection is coordinated back and forth between the Corps and USGS. Good projects should move forward. Negative ones definitely out unless something overrides it. If A-Team ranks project high and Corps and USGS throw it out, A-Team deserves an explanation. Corps will be looking for application of work being done, as an example LIDAR applied to other research, on the ground or modeling great idea but not just testing it.

Rob distributed guidance that was sent out for APE’s and developing letters of intent. Need criteria as well that was in the e-mail. John recommended in future include criteria in hard copy of themes.

Janet’s thought on APEs—Could we use this April meeting to discuss the APE topics? Could we announce it at end of Feb or 1<sup>st</sup> part of March? Jennie—it will work fine, new theme ideas set us back a bit this year. Consensus was that we aim for sooner. More review time that way, which is easier for all parties involved. Jennie doesn’t mind if we send reminders, too. Rob’s e-mail changed to [Rob.Maher@Illinois.gov](mailto:Rob.Maher@Illinois.gov). All Illinois DNR employees will be formatted that way.

John Chick’s additional idea: tried money for seed research (pilot) with product being submitted to an outside funding agency. Some people go in and do pilot, then write grant proposal for additional funding. If you get it, all products stay with you and acknowledge LTRMP in the funding. Could work either as long term, large projects or to a more specific area. Other outside agencies tend to fund things that build on available data. Great idea with value added was the consensus. The downside, for the INHS was that people wouldn’t follow through and submit it elsewhere. How do you follow up and enforce it? Barry-likes to see the flexibility. At both stages has to be evaluated on what it will do for LTRMP. Not necessarily a criteria to be invoked for all proposals, but one of the products could be submittal for additional funding. Pilot should be actually going out and doing some research, not used to spend more time to write a grant. Truly a project that stands alone and also serves as preliminary data for a larger proposal. Scope

of project could be enlarged with additional funding. Seems to be a good way to handle multi-year projects as well. Greg Sass-a lot of those proposals could be carried on to larger collaborations. It will help people to think about that, outside the box. Barry-let's flesh it out and see how we can fund it. Some expectation with a coordination and credit back to the program. Feedback mechanism to all field stations, UMESC, and the program—products get distributed within LTRMP and EMP.

John Chick—APE projects can be used a pilot studies, stand alone products that help the EMP/LTRMP, but with an additional product being an application to some other source to carry the project farther, and stipulation that the larger products of the final project with outside support be distributed back within the LTRMP/EMP program. Program consensus on this.

\*Restoration of additional monitoring activities: The A-Team as a whole has been uncomfortable with MSP from a biological perspective and has been struggling with how to incorporate more monitoring into the program. Last night field stations looked at monitoring that has direct benefit to local resource managers. IL, MO, Iowa all in agreement that first period fish sampling be put back in program in years with extra funding. Northern field stations are not as concerned with first period fish sampling because spawning delayed into the second time period. Upper filed stations had more difficulty, but finally agreed on some water quality. Outside APE project selection – MSP+. Anything above MSP be considered for additional monitoring. It was estimated to take approximately \$70K to implement at all stations. Question from Karen Hagerty-change in latitude is the issue, does it make sense to adjust the sampling for latitude instead? At face value has merit, but sacrificing 3<sup>rd</sup> period sampling was deemed not acceptable. That is when you can assess what's recruited from the 1<sup>st</sup> time period. Consistent enumeration of time period saves confusion when people look over data although the data set is already fragmented. It was decided not to modify the historic database. Biweekly WQ for fixed sites in northern reaches. Trying to determine what are the most critical issues to local managers. WQ monthly sampling event misses temporal resolution. Summer heat and storms, DO sags, etc. Revision to the sampling program in 2000 looked at correlation from one sampling event to another. Budgeting makes it difficult for some stations to hire seasonal staff, there needs to be some flexibility built in. For example, John chick can't hire hourly for 1.5 months, he could do work with staffing we have, but when submitting APE's, he would have to put more \$ for hourly employees. EMAP helps boost up hourly staff. The question was raised about what to do with monies above and beyond MSP. Instead of adding bigger pot of money to APE's, put money back into monitoring. Bathymetry and Status and Trends Report have been incorporated into the MSP now. These activities could expand and constrict. Commitment under MSP was stability for 5-yr horizon. Even MSP was designed to be flexible. This year expanded bathymetry. MSP—get budget for FY07, make decision in or out of MSP+, get hourly folks hired. This would be in that category before we do the APES. If I get an APE, this is going to be in there. Everything from MSP expanded. Would have to shut off if don't get that money anymore. Jennie—is LTRMP for answering state-specific questions? John Chick—it's beyond very specific state needs. This is what states want, but we do need to hear from FWS and the Corps. Maher—we

have 10 yrs 1<sup>st</sup> period fish to provide baseline. Compare it back to when we were doing 1<sup>st</sup> period sampling. Barry—concept of using 2 periods but stratifying them might have merit. How many YOY fish are caught in 1<sup>st</sup> sampling period? Year class strength is a 3<sup>rd</sup> period thing, what is the purpose of first period sampling? Chick—minifykes do a good job with several species for one year as enumerated in Valerie's report. Iowa was able to follow cohorts and watch their growth, you can also construct a regression curve and predict growth. For IL that 1<sup>st</sup> time period is critical for conducting such analyses. John Chick was poised to publish of impacts of Asian carp on native species. There was a statistically significant correlation between the decline in gizzard shad abundance and overlap in diet with Asian carp. Then, during 1<sup>st</sup> time period fisheries sampling a collection of over 10 thousand gizzard shad in a single minifyke stopped him from writing a fallacious manuscript. Rob—a burning question for us in Illinois is, what factors limit fish production. One way to look at that is examining if fish produced in 1<sup>st</sup> time period recruit into the 3<sup>rd</sup>. Barry- is monitoring the best way to approach that? It's a question of where is the best place to put our money? All need to be evaluated against each other. Astounded at the low cost of this across all 6 field stations, which is primarily operational costs. One of criticisms of program so far is haven't tied it back to managers. Have to do something with this. Budget process is critical, it is possible to go several years in a row with all three periods intact. T. Miller - St. Louis perspective Minimum Sustainable Program—in my mind something is better than nothing. We never took the time to build a way back into the program to restart some of the monitoring. This is a way to do this on a small scale. If EMP becomes incorporated into NESP this becomes a moot point. Speaking for St. Louis district, want monitoring built back in. Greg Sass – Additional sampling helps with standard fish population assessments, you can still get good information even if there are holes in the dataset. Need to ask, what are we missing that could be a critical component of fish populations. We cannot track impacts of Asian carp by looking back into first 10 yrs. More time periods can look back between 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>. 3 years in a row can do things we cannot do with standard 1 year . Jim Fischer—we don't have data from critical drought period in Lake Pepin. Would be valuable. Huge return with small money, we need the most robust program within fiscal constraints. Greg Sass- We can't address why if we're missing critical information between. Barry—critical as go into NESP- trying to use monitoring data for detecting that want to do it system wide. Why the WQ stuff only in 4 and 8 and not in other reaches. Don't see the reason for us not to do WQ system wide. Pat Heglund is planning a dual role for USGS and the Service right now for inverts. Shirley will inform us about lab costs. John Chick-form a committee, write it up get true budget proposals benefits drawbacks and limitations. Include in write-up anticipated application. Talk to Brian and Jeff. Jim Fischer, Rob, Brian, Jeff. Greg is willing as well. Talk to Melinda and see where we're going with invert stuff. Movement on mussel work within NESP up in Pool 5. Is this worth pursuing? Are we on the right track? Marv—take information and put it into something. Need full-cost accounting. To be fair we need to put it on the table and look at it. Hope to have S&T finished next year. We'll need to make a decision. Monitoring –gives you a stronger look. All is based on weight of evidence. More monitoring data, more weight of evidence. 1<sup>st</sup> period fish sampling is a burning issue. Increases ability to pick up those rare species you don't see as well as have higher catches of adult fish to work with in length freq, etc. Any increase in effort should be beneficial

to collect those sorts of things. One black carp or 2 pallid sturgeon caught in Pool 26 in 1<sup>st</sup> period would be a significant benefit. Bighead and silver carp reproductive success in 2000 would have been missed in Illinois without first period sampling. By 3<sup>rd</sup> time period these fishes had recruited out and no other gear picked them up. Including 3 time periods makes it a stronger assessment from a community structure basis. John Chick will chair committee to develop a proposal for review at the August A-Team meeting. Move to EMPCC level after that. We'll have a face to face in August for evaluating APEs.

\*Next meeting - Tuesday, Aug 1 at the Lewis and Clark Community College in Alton. John Chick requested 5 minutes of the agenda for the president of L&C college to speak. Iowa rep indicated that he would not be able to attend but could call in.

\* Marv-20<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration. FWS refuges with HREPS, Corps Districts, Field stations should all display information and capitalize on media opportunities. Energy is now for this, don't know what will happen with NESP. Given uncertainties of the future we need to demonstrate 20yrs of success and experience. NESP fresh look and challenge, but in short term move forward as positively and proactively as we can. Meet with media, material provided by Corps. Need to demonstrate a viable functioning program. Florida Everglades restoration has expended 3 mil for public relations, compared to 3K for NESP and <5K for EMP in last couple years. There is a media day coming in Havana media that presents a good opportunity to display the program. Large River Conf. exhibit as well. Corps can't free handout material. Maybe consider mouse pads. 1 GIG flash drives? Drawing for a larger prize??? Barry will have a few copies of the Large Rivers Conference program. Ron Rada will be here tomorrow at MRRC. Broad interest regionally as well as internationally. Sara Lubinski is part of the art tours.

In first Chapter of S&T—vision, goals, as relates to stressors, indicators. Need to try to go back historically and pull things together to identify how we relate ourselves to goal, vision, how indicators connect to things. Look at that and see if we've captured in essence that bit of history to organize within that context. There are gaps, but it does provide that structure. At some point in time we need to decide if we've accurately captured it. Report is likely to be in June or July in draft form.

Barry would like to host a get-together at his house tonight—beer, wine, munchies. 1931 Nakomis Ave. By May 4 morning yes no by noon. Adjourned 11:50 am.

Minutes of the Analysis Team Meeting  
August 1, 2006  
Lewis and Clark Community College  
Godfrey, IL

Attendees: Mari Nord (Region V, EPA), T. Miller (St. Louis District COE), Marvin Hubbell (Rock Island District COE), Karen Hagerty (Rock Island District COE), Dan Kirby (IA DNR), Jennie Sauer (USGS-UMESC), Rob Maher (IL DNR), John Chick (INHS Alton), Jim Fischer (WI DNR), Greg Sass (INHS Havana), Matt O'Hara (INHS Havana), Bob Hrabik (MO DOC), Janet Sternburg (MO DOC), Dale Chapman (Lewis and Clark Community College), Lyle Guyon (National Great Rivers Research and Education Center). Phone Participants: Walt Popp (MN DNR), Valerie Barko (MO DOC), Terry Dukerschein (WI DNR), Linda Leake (USGS-UMESC)

1. Roll Call and Introductions.
2. Welcoming address from Lewis and Clark Community College President and chair of the board of Directors, Dale Chapman.

The campus consists of many historic buildings modeled after Princeton dating back to 1835. The school was initially founded as a womens' college by the village of Godfrey. In 1970 the State purchased and converted the campus to a community college. There are currently 17,000 credit and non-credit students enrolled. Being located at the confluence of Illinois and Mississippi Rivers make the campus ideally suited to study Great Rivers. Work has been ongoing for last 4 years to set up the National Great Rivers Research and Education Center (NGREC). Plans are in place for a \$9.5 million building located at Mel Price Lock and Dam that will house the field station and support research activities. There is a diverse crew of people currently involved in all manner of research related to large river ecosystems.

3. National Great Rivers Research and Education Center Update. Lyle Guyon, a Forest Ecologist who is part of university the faculty, gave a powerpoint presentation, which provided an update on Great Rivers Education Center highlighting the following activities.
  - a. Integrated approach to understanding rivers and their watersheds.
  - b. Disseminating Scientific Research and expertise
  - c. Adaptive Management
  - d. Developing and implementing an educational outreach program for greater understanding of great rivers
  - e. Comprehensive database on Mississippi River and its watersheds
  - f. Partnership with University of Illinois and Lewis and Clarke College, Illinois Water Resources Program, and the Illinois Natural History Surveys' Great Rivers field station in Brighton, IL. Also collaborate with Nature Conservancy, Southern IL University at Carbondale, and many others.
  - g. Introduced staff and leaders involved

- h. Construction is ready to go on the state of the art facility to house the Great Rivers FS and more office space for faculty, etc. Just waiting for funding verification.
  - i. Illinois River Watch Program—large scale volunteer scientist monitoring program (have for rivers, forests, prairies, etc.) Idea is to get it back up and running with grants and have coordinator—reinitiated this year.
  - j. Examples of kinds of things involved with: Studies of electric fish barrier between Illinois River and the Great Lakes system, Hg and CH<sub>3</sub>-Hg site accumulation studies, forest studies. Peruvian Amazon collaboration, integrated research and scientific pubs in multiple journals.
  - k. Outreach: Environmental conflict Resolution Project piloted in high school classrooms, grant from EPA Region 5, annual environmental festival, spring birding festival among others. Lewis and Clarke: There are currently 2 dozen student interns from 10 different colleges working on research or other issues. They will be having a symposium Aug. 8 and 9 to disseminate their results. Also Illinois Cache River Program conference scheduled for Aug. 12.
4. Approval of meeting minutes from the April 26, 2006 meeting in LaCrosse, WI. Marvin Hubbell expressed some concern and confusion over how the section of the minutes regarding the additional monitoring proposal was covered. Maher stated it is hard to tease out any formal recommendations on the add-back for monitoring in the minutes, but thought we were all on the same page to go forward with a proposal. Maher asked if carrying it forward with a formal recommendation, discussion, documentation and vote would help. Consensus was that that was probably not necessary and that we would discuss the proposal today. He said the proposal addresses a lot of how it would be implemented and at what funding level, which was the concern—formulating policy informally. Intention at meeting today is to discuss the proposal and if this group feels it's warranted. Minutes were accepted with Marvin's comments.
5. FY-07 Budget Update (USACOE) Marvin Hubbell reported that the House has \$20 million and the Senate is at \$16 for EMP. The Corps is expecting the final funding figure to be somewhere between. From a planning perspective works better to look at the low side. Congress is looking at savings and slippage this year around 4% but uncertain of what the final figure will be. All bills are now Upper Mississippi Restoration. John Chick questioned why. Marvin responded, Washington is not sharing that with us. It's a comprehensive plan for restoration. They are looking at how to put programs together most efficiently and economically. Finishing up status and trends will help the process along a lot, Hubbell said. At the end of year 2 or year 3 hopefully we'll be able to follow a wider plan. Janet Sternberg made a point that with LTRM in place, it would be inefficient to start from scratch, she also asked, have we started on the next 5-yr plan? Marvin responded, yes there has been some work started. "I'm not suggesting we start from scratch on anything," Hubbell said. Status and trends report will raise questions that the A-Team and EMPCC need to address that will affect the next 5 yr plan. John Chick asked, how will we characterize that? Can we now identify some subdivisions of the entire system to look at? Not all

indicators will address every problem out there. Questions at different levels—policy is one level. John Chick expressed concerns regarding raising the outpool sampling question. He is concerned that we are going to spin our wheels again. How do we get at what's going on in the outpools in a way we can afford to get a meaningful level of information? We should be able to determine if an HREP has changed an entire reach by looking at the monitoring data for that reach. We have a plan for years 6-10—we're able to do certain things, but not others. After this 5-yr. segment done, do we want keep doing it for next 5 years or do we want to make adjustments. Chick suggested we start on that ASAP, by starting to set goals and objectives at the October A-Team meeting. He stressed that we need to finish the status and trends report and use that to guide future planning efforts. Need to identify what is important as the EMP merges into NESP and what role the A-Team will play. John stated he'd be happy to assist with whatever efforts, but expressed concerns about having projects sort of waiting until they can go to construction. Marvin Hubbell—if you wait for change, you have no idea which way to go, but I believe major program contributions can help determine that. If we know where we want to go and have a vision, that merger or integration will be influenced by that. T. Miller said, last he knew the A-Team was still considered a player in any merger under NESP but was uncertain where exactly where they will fit in. Marv—other perception is there will be a whole new institutional process. I think you will see a lot more common structure and paradigm than you might expect. A-Team communication with the science panel is a good idea. The idea was tabled with the intention of bringing it back up at November EMPCC meeting.

6. Brief discussion regarding products for APE projects. How should peer reviewed publications be considered? Marv—struggled with it for a long time. Peer reviewed publications lends scientific credibility to the program. The drawback is that there is often a delay in getting information out to managers if it has to go through the publication process. Need to define what is the product. Jennie Sauer, we have had this discussion before. Linda Leake, both Marv and Jennie correct—one other nuance—LTRMP generally funds through the final draft, not through end result in the journal. Example: there is an LTRM document already on the website containing information, which is a product for the public. This information cannot be cited until done in a peer-reviewed journal. Doesn't matter if shared up and down the river, if it's not published, it's still eligible for publication. If working on publications is part of the job, how do you track publication-related work? Marv—it sounds like the difference we have is getting additional funding to go from the report the Corps has to getting it ready for the journal. What I'm hearing is that there is probably MSP work for moving it forward to the publications, but the corps closes it out with the report. Marv said the answer is to know where it's going on and to not pretend like it's not going on. Several years down the road, look at which authors have gotten journal publications and maybe give their projects consideration. Marv, need to dispel the notion the Corps has a contractual obligation to fund the work for a journal article. LTRM completion report has some value and are reviewed from within program. To individuals outside the program the LTRMP report is not considered a peer reviewed publication. Marv—seems to be some projects where one or the other is more



appropriate. Take it back to USGS but not have a blanket advocating of funding MSP time to finish for a journal. USGS will take it back and discuss it.

#### Short break

7. Discussion and ranking of FY-07 APE projects –A spreadsheet was distributed that contained all of the partner rankings. The far right column is an average ranking across the 5 states, USFES and EPA. The values are an average of whoever provided input. Comments provided by the EPA and FWS are not tied to specific projects. Figures were compiled 2 different ways, using 1, 2, 3 for Low, Medium and High and 1, 5, 10. It was decided that the 1, 5 and 10 rankings provided more of a distinction between projects and those were used. The teleconferencing participants were sent copies of the spreadsheet. General consensus was that we're way ahead of the process from where we were last year. The question was raised, how should the A-Team forward the rankings? If there is a windfall of funding it may behoove us to rank a second or 3<sup>rd</sup> tier. We'll give USGS a recommendation today and USGS and Corps will hash it out. Rob Maher will represent A-Team in Rock Island at the meeting between USGS and the Corps. Marv—look at details of budget breakdowns and also some of the projects have alternatives. Rob said it's helpful to the group for USGS and the Corps to disclose their thought processes in making the final funding decisions. Consensus was to take the APES forward as ranked in the 1,5,10 scheme but states that haven't yet provided official comments were asked to turn them in to Jennie Sauer by Aug. 8.

#### Lunch Break—reconvene at 1:15

8. Discussion of additional monitoring proposal was very long. Corps and states are close to agreement, but USGS is not happy that the component specialists were not initially brought into this and has not had time to discuss the proposal with them (Linda Leake). USGS science leader, A-Team and Science Advisory panel should have worked more cooperatively. John Chick commented that both the Water Quality and Fish specialist had provided some comments regarding the proposal and he agreed to let UMESC provide further review to the revised draft. There was considerable discussion about whether or not this proposal should be handled as an APE project or as a MSP+ item, similarly to bathymetry and data visualization tools. Ultimately it was decided to forward the revised proposal to the EMPCC for guidance with this issue.
9. 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration - Postcards are going out and the program has been planned.
10. John Chick – There are many people would like to see the component specialists from USGS attend the A-Team meetings.

11. Time and Place for next meeting. Next meeting will be held October 18, 2006 in Rock Island, details will be distributed electronically.

12. Adjourned at 4:35 pm.

## EMP LTRMP Analysis Team Report

August 23, 2006  
Radisson Hotel  
LaCrosse, Wisconsin

The Analysis Team held a meeting on August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2006 at the Lewis and Clark Community College campus in Alton, Illinois. There were thirteen members of the A-Team present, all agencies except the USFWS and NRCS were represented. The USFWS representative was not able to attend due to a scheduling conflict and the NRCS has yet to replace their representative since Fred Kollman's retirement. The objectives of the meeting were to; discuss and rank the FY-07 additional program element project proposals and discuss the proposal to restore specific Monitoring Elements to the LTRMP in the years when sufficient funds are available.

**Discussion and Ranking of FY-07 APE project proposals** – A total of 24 APE project proposals were submitted to the USGS for funding consideration. Jennie Sauer circulated the full set of proposals to the A-Team to review approximately one week before the meeting. Distribution of the proposals before the meeting greatly helped facilitate discussion and ranking. Prior to the meeting individual A-Team members' rankings were compiled to generate the overall A-Team ranking. The top 10 ranked projects are listed below in order of preference from highest to lowest. Concerns were raised by several A-Team members regarding the final selection process for FY-07 APE projects. Historically there have been projects ranked high by the A-Team that were not funded and projects that were ranked low by the A-Team that were funded. This has led to some concerns regarding the selection process. To help alleviate these concerns, Rob Maher (A-Team Chairperson) requested to be allowed to attend the meeting between the ACOE and USGS during which projects are selected for funding. A-Team representation at this meeting will hopefully help clarify the aura of mystery that is perceived to be associated with final project selection.

- \*Aquatic vegetation and water quality response following two summers of water level management on Navigation Pool 5
- \*Asian carp effects on zooplankton abundance and composition in backwater lakes
- \*Development of sampling designs for estimating mussel abundances associated with HREPs
- \*Testing the fundamental assumption underlying the use of LTRMP fish data: does variation in LTRMP CPUE data reflect variation in the abundance of fishes
- \*Investigation of waterbird die-offs on the Upper Mississippi River System: monitoring of the exotic *Bithynia tentaculata*, faucet snail
- \*Pre- and post-Asian carp (*Hypophthalmichthys* spp.) invasion food web dynamics in the Illinois River implications for further spread of exotic cyprinids
- \*Assessing aquatic vegetation communities as limiting factors for fish communities within the Upper Illinois River
- \*Primary production and dissolved oxygen dynamics in contrasting aquatic areas of the UMRS
- \*Association between fish assemblage and off-channel area type in the impounded reach of the Upper Mississippi and Illinois rivers: implications for habitat restoration at management-relevant scales
- \*Fishery enhancement assessment plan and initial pre-project sampling for the Pool 12 overwintering HREP

**Discussion of proposal to re-instate specific monitoring elements to the LTRMP** – At the last A-Team meeting a committee was formed to develop a proposal to re-instate some aspects of monitoring back into the LTRMP during years of adequate funding. This proposal was drafted in response to ongoing concerns among most A-Team members regarding cut backs to the monitoring program that were enacted to fit within the Minimum Sustainable Program. The

proposal was discussed and concerns were raised by ACOE representatives regarding the lack of products after each year. There was also considerable debate regarding how this proposal should be incorporated into the program. Specifically, should this proposal be treated as an APE project and reviewed with the same criteria or should it be incorporated as an element of the program during years when funding is available. It was agreed that the authors would revise the proposal to include some clearly identifiable products. This revised proposal would then be forwarded to the EMPCC for consideration and guidance on how it should be incorporated into the LTRMP.

**Time and Place for next meeting** – It was decided to hold a face to face meeting on October 18, 2006 in the Quad Cities.

### *Improved Focusing Questions*

1. Participants discussed the trade-offs between fostering creativity within the scientific community and using more focused questions to ensure that the APEs address LTRMP priorities. There was reluctance to develop a highly prescriptive RFP that would essentially dictate a scope of work for APEs, and there was equal concern with simply leaving it to scientists to propose projects along broad themes. Instead, **there was general, though not necessarily unanimous, consensus that articulating more specific, answerable questions to guide the development of APE proposals would be beneficial. There was also general, but not necessarily unanimous, agreement that the APE questions should address concerns of resource managers and/or critical science questions.** Participants stressed that previous efforts, including the Science Planning Process, could help inform the development of these questions.
2. Options for preserving some flexibility in combination with the improved focusing questions were discussed. Of note, **participants expressed interest in possibly allowing a small a portion of the APE allocation to be used for promising, innovative projects that are not directly responsive to the priority questions.** The terms under which such proposals would compete for APE funding would need to be determined.
3. **Participants recommended the following process for developing the focusing questions:**
  - a. **Each EMP-CC member will be asked to identify their state or agency's top three priority questions, in consultation with their A-Team member and others within their state or agency.** The deadline for this will be November 8 [subsequently changed to November 9]. For those EMP-CC members who submitted questions in follow-up to the October 3 conference call, this is an opportunity to revise or refine those questions if they would like.
  - b. **In submitting their priority questions, EMP-CC members will be asked to provide additional background information that will help ensure the other partners understand the nature and importance of the questions.** Examples include describing how managers and others will use the information and the question's relationship to LTRMP goals and objectives.
  - c. **USGS will then work with the individual EMP-CC members as necessary to refine the questions to ensure that they are posing researchable questions that the LTRMP could reasonably address through APE projects.**
  - d. **USGS, USACE, and the A-Team will be asked to rank the questions, and then there will be an effort to develop a consensus ranking among the three entities.**
  - e. **The results of the rankings will be reported back to the participants in this meeting and then to the EMP-CC at its February meeting.**

### *Other*

1. **USGS, USACE, and the A-Team Chair will consult regarding recommended documentation for FY 08 APE proposals and the selection criteria that will be employed.**

2. **It remains to be determined how best to handle the items formerly placed in the MSP+ category.** The Corps has announced its intention to eliminate this category, but there is an ongoing need to fund several of these items (e.g., Status and Trends, equipment refreshment, tool development, etc.). They are different in some respects from projects typically funded as APEs and may not fit well in that category. In addition to assigning these items to a budget category, a process for determining how funding will be allocated to them must be developed — e.g., if they are in the APE category, will these former MSP+ items go through the same ranking process as the research-oriented APEs?
3. Under the 2004 restructuring plan, FY 09 is identified as the start-up year for the next LC/LU coverage. Work in FY 09 would consist primarily of getting ready to secure the necessary air coverage in FY 10, but it would represent an additional funding demand on the program.

### **Strategic Planning for FY 10 and Beyond:**

In addition to addressing the immediate issues surrounding refinement of the APE process for FY 08 and 09, **participants agreed that it will soon be important to initiate LTRMP strategic planning for FY 10 and beyond. They agreed that this should be deferred until February 2007**, in order to complete the more immediate APE refinement work outlined above. However, in their brief discussion, participants did identify several considerations and questions, including:

1. **Strategic planning for FY 10 and beyond is a critical opportunity for the partners to identify the key questions that should shape the program.** This will be a broader effort than identifying the APE focusing questions for FY 08 and 09 and should entail a comprehensive look at all elements of the LTRMP.
2. **The status of the NESP authorization and its anticipated future will have significant implications for the LTRMP strategic planning process.**
3. **What is the appropriate planning increment? The 2004 restructuring plan covered five years, and this is probably about the right duration.**