

**A-Team Meeting – October 22, 2020**  
**Webex Webinar**

Attendance:

A-Team Reps:

Nick Schlessler (Chair and MN Rep)  
Shawn Giblin (WI Rep)  
Scott Gritters (IA Rep)  
Dave Glover (Designated IL Rep)  
Matt Vitello (MO Rep)  
Steve Winter (USFWS Rep)

USGS:

Jeff Houser  
Jennie Sauer  
Brian Ickes  
Danelle Larson  
Kathi Jo Jankowski  
Nate De Jager  
Ben Findley  
Molly Van Appledorn

USACE:

Karen Hagerty  
Marshall Plumley  
Ben McGuire  
Davi Michl  
Eric Hanson  
Camie Knollenberg

UMRBA:

Andrew Stephenson  
Kirsten Wallace

MN:

Megan Moore

WI:

Jim Fischer  
Deanne Drake

IA:

Dave Bierman  
Randy Schultz

IL:

John Chick  
Jim Lamer

MO:

Dave Herzog

USFWS:

Neal Jackson

Introduction and Roll Call, Nick Schlesser

Time, place, and type of next meeting and approval of July 2020 A-Team meeting minutes

Next meeting will be webinar with date determined by Doodle Poll in January

Motion to approve minutes made by Scott Gritters and Matt Vitello (second) passed with unanimous approval.

## UMRR Update from Marshall Plumley

Upcoming engagements:

UMRBA - 27 October Webinar  
UMRR Coordinating Committee Meeting - 28 October Webinar  
Discover the Illinois Waterway Forum - 29 October Webinar  
Bass Ponds HREP Groundbreaking - 6 November  
Pool 12 Forestry HREP Project Kickoff – 1-3 December Webinar

- Federal fiscal year just ended with most of money spent
- FY 20 Program --\$33,170,000/\$32,652,767.23
- McGregor Lake (MVP) Contract Awarded 28 Sep
- FY 21 Program --\$33,170,000 Pending Appropriations

HREP feasibility:

- Reno Bottoms (MVP) Formulating alternatives
- Lower Pool 10 (MVP) TSP Fall 2020
- Steamboat (MVR) Routing final packet to MVD for signatures
- Pool 12 Forestry (MVR) 1 3 December kickoff meeting (Marshall is excited about the 1<sup>st</sup> forestry centric project)
- Yorkinut (MVS) Completed Chapters 1&2; Existing structures survey completed. H&H modeling initiated.
- Oakwood Bottoms (MVS) DQC completed. Preparing for public review. Preparing for ATR.

HREP Design/Construction:

- Harpers Slough (MVP) FY21 Award
- Bass Ponds (MVP) Groundbreaking 6 Nov
- Keithsburg Stage II Design 100% review late Oct
- Huron Island (MVR) ERDC/MVR planted aquatic vegetation on Sept 23rd
- Clarence Cannon (MVS) Ongoing construction
- Piasa & Eagles Nest Islands (MVS) FY 20 Contract Award (Sept 25th)

LTRM:

- FY21 LTRM SOW and budget development complete, awaiting funds
- FY 21 UMRR Science in Support of Restoration & Monitoring SOW 95% complete
- 3rd UMRR Status and Trends report partner review draft distributed ~9 October

Karen Hagerty - \$8.8 million for LTRM and Science

- Science pot will cover overruns in LTRM
  - o IL rates have increased
  - o \$375,000 off the top of Science to cover
  - o Roughly \$2.1 million for science remaining

<b>FY21 <u>Draft</u> Plan of Work</b>	<b>Budget</b>
<b>TOTAL FY21 Program</b>	<b>\$33,170,000</b>
<b>Regional Administration and Program Efforts</b>	<b>\$ 1,250,000</b>
Regional Management	\$ 1,000,000
Program Database	\$ 100,000
Program Support Contract	\$ 100,000
Public Outreach	\$ 50,000
<b>Regional Science and Monitoring</b>	<b>\$10,400,000</b>
LTRM (Base Monitoring)	\$5,000,000
UMRR Regional Science In Support Rehabilitation/Mgmt. (MIPR's, Contracts, and Labor)	\$ 3,800,000
UMRR Regional (Integration, Adapt. Mgmt.)	\$ 200,000
Habitat Evaluation (split between MVS, MVR, MVP)	\$ 1,125,000
Report to Congress	\$ 275,000
<b>District Habitat Rehabilitation Efforts (Planning and Construction)</b>	<b>\$21,520,000</b>
Rock Island District	\$ 7,020,000
St. Louis District	\$ 7,125,000
St. Paul District	\$ 7,275,000
Model Cert.	\$ 100,000

## Program Initiatives:

- Statements of UMRS Significance
  - o Supports report to congress
- HREP Guidance Documents
  - o Try to address Corps focused past documents with a partnership centric approach
- 2013 UMRR Joint Charter Review
  - o Includes A-Team charter as a subset and addresses HREP portion
- 2015-2025 Strategic and Operational Plan Review
  - o Midpoint check
  - o Engage larger audience with survey questions
- 2022 Report to Congress
  - o Every 6 years
  - o Starting to gather details

## COVID Updates

### MN

- Stay at home work orders extended to June 2021
- Require a check in with supervisor to report to work outside of your home

### WI

- Not much change
- Stay at home for foreseeable future
- Check in with supervisor

### IA

- Mostly work from home
- Offices are using hybrid system
- Work in pods (some groups)
- No volunteers to speak of (few)
- LTRM all in office but masked

### IL

#### Dave Glover

- Working from home 50% capacity at office
- No volunteers but few restrictions for IDNR

#### John Chick

- Safety protocol approved by Prairie Institute
- Divide station by arrival times to segregate
- Little lab work now will sort it out as it comes

## MO

- No changes from last update
- Offices open, but 50-60% work from home

## FWS

- No changes
- Primary work from home
- Rotate time in office
- 2 people per boat

## USACE

- Rock Island – More people in HQ building, but voluntary
- St Louis – Phase I up to 25% in office

## UMESC

- No changes
- Only lab folks at office
- Forms to go in or out

## Charter Review – Andrew Stephenson

Andrew provided a summary review of a survey conducted to collect input from current and past A-Team affiliated individuals about the role(s) of the A-Team past and future. (Embedded Below)



A-Team Survey  
Summary\_10.22.2020

### Questions

- Should A-Team guide LTRM vs guide science of UMRR

Shawn Giblin – Would like to see A-Team guide general science aspects.

Jennie Sauer – Focal areas are how the A-Team provides guidance for science focus

Megan Moore – Are we discussing just LTRM or science done under LTRM

Jennie Sauer – Base monitoring is well set. Initial A-Team scope was focused at base monitoring, but now components have dedicated component specialists

Steve Winter – Not needed in day to day activities with LTRM, but never and harm in having additional resources to guide program.

Karen Hagerty -- Draft WRDA language for increased funding may need input from A-Team on how to use money – (new components, crews, etc.)

Jeff Houser – A-Team would be a critical aspect in any expansion

### Discussion of Charter Language

Nick Schlessner – Some initial thoughts from my review

- 1) Do we need to add text related to a secretary position to assist with minutes (had discussed incoming chair position be tasked with this responsibility to help current chair)
- 2) Do we need to change NRCS and EPA listings because of lack of involvement? (language that allows for quorum to be determined as a percentage of those representatives present likely make this unnecessary)

Karen Hagerty – Change “or” to “and” on 1<sup>st</sup> slide discussion point

### Comparison to Past Roles

Andrew Stephenson – A-Team role has matured. In past focused around major funding decisions (see slides in embossed PDF)

Nick Schlessner – Support of upper level agency staff for A-Team could be encouraged by input to those agencies from UMRR CC where higher level staff are more engaged

Matt Vitello – I wear both hats (A-Team and UMRR CC) and am generally against A-Team involvement in budgetary decisions.

Unknown – Would functions not included in the charter be addressed by the switch in language on the first slide

Jennie Sauer – All issues fall under general category of guiding science

Shawn Giblin – Agree that a broad writing of charter is the appropriate approach

Karen Hagerty – Emerging contaminants is a fine line between EPA role and monitoring role (like with invasive species)

Nate De Jager – Getting at linkage between A-Team and UMRBA instead of A-Team and scientists

- States driving changes in HREPs to tackle new issues
- What level are we talking about affecting

John Chick – typical projects fish and habitat related may need to address topics like contaminants

Nick Schlessner – Would a language change from the first slide address this?

Jennie Sauer – when I use the term LTRM I mean the whole of science in the UMRR.

Andrew Stephenson – when continuing we may need to tease science and LTRM apart more on future slides

For example adaptive management

- In strategic plan but more unclear about how it would apply to A-Team
- Would “science” allow A-Team to discuss adaptive management?

To address the Missed Opportunities slide from the A-Team review:

Jeff Houser: After STII the post mortem from the A-Team was a source for STIII

Karen Hagerty – We consciously continue to improve science ranking process with each round.

Shawn Giblin – also disagree that Status and Trends was a missed opportunity

Andrew Stephenson -- 18 individuals took the A-Team survey. It was distributed to the A-Team list and was requested to be forwarded to others with experience

Karen Hagerty – HREP prioritization typically falls under the river teams

Nick Schlessler—Agree same people are often doing the job twice on different groups

Marhsall Plumley – Agree A-Team Reps are already involved through the river teams

Steve Winter – Don’t think the A-Team needs to review HREPs. Would only add complexity.

Andrew Stephenson – could be involved in incorporating science into fact sheets

Scott Gritters – Didn’t look at missed opportunities as ongoing when I took the survey – many have since been corrected.

Jeff and Jennie – Meetings would be very different if there was extensive public participation in them

Nick Schlessler -- Does the A-Team need to reach out to US EPA and NRCS?

On the Roles slide in presentation use “And” instead of “or”?

Karen Hagerty – explicitly should be “and”

Jennie Sauer – “Guide UMRR LTRM and science”

Kirsten Wallace – Might be language in strategic plan to look at.

Jim Fisher – USGS provides ‘guidance” use “advise” instead.

Language is a general placement no specific location

Karen Hagerty -- Suggest including a paragraph on purpose at the beginning of the charter

- Expand to include other science etc.
- Place to really state why we are a body and what we do

Nick Schlessler – I Like that a lot.

Karen Hagerty – add “other activities identified in the UMRR-CC strategic plan” to address comment by Kirsten

Unknown – Do river teams have public participation?

Marshall – river teams have a once a year forum for public input

Megan Moore – concern about opening up A-Team meetings involving a review of use of Tax Payer money for science

Shawn and Jim – more of a listening session plus a science 101 on river functions

Kirsten Wallace – Attendees found value in attending listening sessions

- Maybe A-Team should recommend a forum be held by UMRR or UMRBA
- “What is desired future condition?” as the theme question

Nick Schlessler, Jennie Sauer, Jeff Houser, and Karen Hagerty will meet before upcoming meeting to draft new charter language with the following goals:

- Change initial paragraph as described by Karen
- Review website section, but no need to remove references to the website
- Add “other activities identified in UMRR-CC strategic plan”
- Don’t strike point 6, but perhaps change language from regular meeting to listening session.

### Status and Trends III – Jeff Houser

- All A-Team got the draft document
- Please provide 1 set of comments representing each agency
- If possible comments should be submitted as a Word document referencing line numbers rather than in the document itself
- Most interested on comments on flow, representation of data, etc.
- Expertise to flesh out management implications particularly useful
- Report is formatted in three tiers
  - o Lvl 1 High Level – Where things are changing and how
  - o Lvl 2 Summary Box – Nutshell summary (not formatted yet)
  - o Lvl 3 High Detail – Main text

#### Summary Tables

1<sup>st</sup> broad contexts of things that follow

- 2 types of assessment (Objective Assessment and Judgement Assessment)

Shawn Giblin – Confused with judgement assessments

Jeff Houser – Maybe should incorporate in text to prevent confusion

Shawn Giblin – Difficult to interpret colors on tables



Kirsten Wallace – White color worked for her

Jeff Houser – Similar to ecosystem structure and function by Nate De Jager

- Don't want to invest a lot of time in judging everything

Scott Gritters – Already using the ST3 draft to answer questions

Karen Hagerty – Like the judgement assessments, important step towards desired future conditions

Nick Schlessler – Concerned about confusion between colors and values (potentially related to typo in draft)

Jeff Houser -- Inclined to remove judgement assessments.

Nick Schlessler -- What is the interpretation of the grey sections on the vegetation tables?

Danelle Larson – They represent unknown values due to no LTRM sampling

Shawn Giblin – Judgement assessments P4 and P8 decreasing phosphorous but listed as improved even though on impaired waters list.

Jeff Houser – Improved does not equal good. Just moving in right direction.

- Always asked to rank as good, fair, poor etc.
- Even halfway step of improving or degrading is difficult

Jennie Sauer – For full report don't look at format, but for tables format comments are welcome.

Kathy Jo Jankowski – Table describes trends NOT status

Nate De Jager – Contiguous floodplain lake color may be wrong

- Can have opposing views on judgement based on reviewers

Jeff Houser – Chapter 10 organized around 2 tables

- Going to think over ideas for now.

Nick Schlessler – I will distribute any additional changes to Chapter 10 as Jeff provides them.

Timeline – Nov 6<sup>th</sup> deadline for comments

Shawn Giblin – Could we delay comment deadline to November 10<sup>th</sup>?

Jeff Houser – Send comments to Jennie by November 13<sup>th</sup> earlier is better.

### Macroinvertebrate Sampling Update – Shawn Giblin

Shawn Giblin – Group assembled with members from each state

-No 1<sup>st</sup> meeting held yet

Jennie Sauer – Side channel proposal will do some invertebrate sampling work. UWL is looking at mayfly emergence (Dr. Ross Vandervorst spp?)

Shawn Giblin – Ross is on the list

Nick Schlessler – Will carry this topic forward to the next meeting agenda.

### Wrap up

Karen Hagerty – Change in URLs for the US ACE websites have been made. Shortcuts from the website have been updated, but links are broken.

Motion to Adjourn Shawn Giblin with a second by Scott Gritters and unanimous approval