

NECC-ECC MINUTES FOR February 21 2006, ST. Louis MO

1. Attendees:

Butch Attwood - ILDNR	Jon Duyvejonck - USFWS	Barb Naramore - UMRBA
John Barko – Science Panel	Dave Ellis – USFWS	Rick Nelson - USFWS
Ken Barr – CEMVR	Christine Favilla – Sierra Club - ISA	Don Powell - CEMVP
Charles Barton - CEMVD	Al Fenedick – USEPA Region 5	Tim Schlagenhaft – MN DNR
Gretchen Benjamin – WI DNR	Bob Hrabik - MODOC	Larry Shepard – USEPA Reg.7
Mark Beorkrem - MRBA	Michael Jawson – USGS-UMESC	Susan Smith - CEMVD
Terry Birkenstock - CEMVP	Barry Johnson – USGS-UMESC	Rebecca Soileau - CEMVP
Kevin Bluhm - CEMVP	Brian Johnson - CEMVS	Chuck Spitzack - CEMVR
John Cannon - CEMVS	Tom Keevin - CEMVS	Dick Steinbach - USFWS
Jack Carr - CEMVR	Teresa Kincaid - CEMVR	Janet Sternburg - MODOC
Bob Clevestine – USFWS	Martin Konrad - IADNR	Holly Stoerker - UMRBA
Joyce Collins – USFWS	Kevin Landwehr - CEMVR	Claude Strauser - CEMVS
Mark Cornish - CEMVR	Ken Lubinski – USCS-UMSEC	Charles Theiling - CEMVR
Hank DeHaan - CEMVR	Catherine Mc Calvin - TNC	Mike Thompson - CEMVS
Charlie Deutsch - CEMVS	Nicole McVay - CEMVR	Richard Worthington - CECW
Jeffrey DeZellar - CEMVP		

2. Calendar:

- **April 11th** – Pool 11 Islands - Science Panel Meeting – at the Stoney Creek Inn, Moline, IL– **April 12th** – Science Panel Meeting, same location.
- **May 16-18** Joint NECC-ECC/EMP-CC/UMRBA meetings in Rock Island IL, at the Four Points Sheraton. **NECC-ECC on May 16th.**
- **May 24-25** – Ecosystem Services Science Panel Workshop – Holiday Inn Express St. Louis Mo. **May 26** – Ecosystem Service Team (Science Panel Workgroup), same location.

3. Action Items:

- Comment on Science Panel Report. NECC – March 10th.
- Have the Science Panel and the A-Team meets at the same location. Barr.
- Send Draft SAV Report to NECC for review. Cornish – end Feb.
- Inform NECC of FY06 SAV sampling locations. Cornish – April
- Send out Grain Flow report to NECC/ECC for comments . McVay – Feb. (done on 2/27)
- Send comments on Grain Flow report to McVay. ECC

4. Notes:

- **Introduction and Opening Remarks**

Ken Barr introduced everyone. He asked for comments or changes to the previous meeting minutes. There were none – minutes stood as written.

Chuck Spitzack discussed the Woodley ASA letter. He says it discusses a conditional authorization for the new 1200' locks. *“I can only support full immediate authorization of the small-scale structural navigation features, the first increment of ecosystem restoration and continuation of PED, including the design of the locks for implementation. I can only conditionally support the recommendation in the Report of the Chief of Engineers for construction of the new locks, pending the Army’s review of the results of the revised economic modeling in accordance with the Corps recommended adaptive management plan.”*

- **NESP FY06 Program Status – MVP, MVR, MVS**

MVP – Jeff DeZellar said that the District (MVP) carried forward all projects from last year except Pool 2 Wingdams (see below). He mentioned that MVP has been experiencing impacts due to hurricane deployment, which has impacted some of the MVP NESP teams. He next briefly discussed the status of the **Ecosystem Projects**. **Pool 5 Drawdown**: this is funded through O&M. However, NESP funded mussel, vegetation and sediment monitoring. There was a strong vegetative response to the drawdown. There were also anecdotal positive responses from those who use the river for recreation. However, did have negative mussel impacts – including State threatened and endangered species. He mentioned that the Corps and partners are still trying to decide how to interpret these results – how to mitigate for mussel impacts. He said they did receive a few letters from recreationists as well as one letter from industry concerned about safety. The team responded to these letters and he felt that the coordination was appropriate. MVP monitored main channel conditions and conducted pilot surveys. Although certain reaches of Pool 5 were more difficult to navigate during the drawdown, there were no serious threats to safety and security of crews, infrastructure and vessels. There is very little know about the total population of mussels in Pool 5, so the report giving estimates about how many mussels were killed is hard to put into context. **Benjamin** said that she got the Final Pool 5 mussel survey report yesterday – so those results will soon be available to the group.

DeZellar continued with **Pool 9 Drawdown**. The team believes they have strong support for a 1-foot drawdown. They will be ready for a drawdown in 2007 should NESP be authorized and have construction dollars. There are mussel and power plant concerns. He continued with **Forestry Management**: The team will complete the Draft Forestry Management Plan this year. The draft is due out this May, with public meeting this summer. They will be presenting the Draft Forestry Management Plan at the UMRCC meeting. **Floodplain management – Root River MN, Pierce County Islands WI** - The team’s goal is to have a Draft Design Agreement by end of the fiscal year. There has been a lot of back and forth and good discussions between The Corps and the States. The next step will be a feasibility (PIR) report. Once we have a Draft Design Agreement and project management plan (PMP) the project will have to hold for authorization. Lock and Dam 8 Embankment Lowering – the FY06 goal is to continue monitoring and acquire necessary bathymetry data. The team is

moving slowly on this and working with stakeholders. Pool 2 Wingdams –the wingdams are ready to construct; however, since there are no construction funds the team cannot continue. The project is ready to go when NESP has an authorization and construction funds.

Next Jeff discussed the Navigation Project– Moorings - this was scaled back for FY06. The team is working on a report on mooring locations, try to prioritize these locations – then have been having discussions with industry. Jeff finished by discussing the Programmatic Institutional Arrangements. Workshops were conducted in 2005. The team developed a draft operational model and has received many comments from stakeholders. These comments have been incorporated comments into the report. Further progress will include coordination within the federal community.

MVS – Brian Johnson began by discussing the Ecosystem Projects. Buffalo Chute team has finished Year 1 monitoring. The draft report is on track. Herculaneum has a recommended plan. The team also finished Year 1 monitoring. FY06 monitoring has been scaled back. Should NESP be authorized this year, it will be an FY07 project with construction in FY08. Mel Price Fish Passage – Brian said that the status of this project will be covered by Mark Cornish later in this meeting. Reach Planning – Harlow Reach – the team had a very good partner meeting last week. Brian added that Hank DeHaan will be covering this project in more detail later in this meeting. Dam Point Control – this year focused solely on hydraulics. Island and Shoreline Protection – The team has chosen Twin Island on the ILWW for ecosystem island and shoreline projection.

Brian continued by discussing the Navigation Projects. LD25 Lock Extension – the team looking at an upstream location as well as the recommended downstream location due to comments received from the public. The team is investigating potential impacts of this location in a mostly in a qualitative way. The team anticipates a final location recommendation by later this Spring.

MVR – Ken Barr began by discussing the Ecosystem Projects – Island and Shoreline Protection – the team has chosen three locations to proceed with planning and NEPA activities: Twin Island (IWW, ecosystem restoration), Pool 10 – Indian Isle (systemic cultural stewardship) and Pool 13 site 11CA10 (systemic cultural stewardship). NEPA and design work will be completed this year and be ready for construction. Barge Fleeting Plan – The team will get the final workshop report out soon and keep working with stakeholders to draft the plan. Ken mentioned that Scott Whitney sent out the workplan for all projects.

Questions/Comments:

No questions or comments

- **First Increment (15 year) Plan – Navigation – Spitzack (Attachment 1 – PowerPoint Slides)**

The first slide had 3 lines showing the First Increments as laid out in the Feasibility Report. Chuck said that the “First Year” starts with first year of Authorization. He said that this slide illustrates the base condition – it assumes that in 2007 we receive authorization and funding begins to ramp up. The second slide showed the 13 year plan of a typical lock. Third slide illustrated the start and finish of all the locks. The fourth slide – illustrated the base condition of the navigation side – partial or full winter closures that would need to happen on the system. The team will work toward trying to line up these closures. Jeff Stamper is in assignment in New Orleans for a few weeks – it is assumed that he will be gone periodically for a few years.

Questions/Comments:

Schlagenhaft – asked for copy of the graph in slide one. **Barr** said that we would get it out in the minutes. **Barr** mentioned that it is important to get these graphs in our head. When we have to do comparable funding reports we will have a benchmark of where we have started and where we have been.

- **Public Involvement and Communication Update – Kevin Bluhm (Attachment X –PowerPoint Slides)**

Slide 3 showed the new website. Kevin said that the website is a patch to a long-term solution of a whole new website. He anticipates this will be implemented in a 3 phase approach. When he discussed the map on Slide 7 he said that the team hoped to eventually have more overlays including NEPS projects and then all other Corps and/or stakeholder projects. Slide 8 - Program Partners – the team anticipates that this image will become a clickable image that references the other agencies and describes the relationships with the partners. He said that a link to the website was sent out last week. The document library and calendar of events are linked directly to the old site. We will continue to support the old site until the new site is fully operational.

Slide 9 - Identity/Image Initiative: the program has funding for logos, slogans, and key messages development; however the team has some issues to work for internally. There is not 100% buy-in before we can move forward. Do have a contractor available to do this work; but cannot pursue this until there is buy-in

Slides 10 and 11 - Communications Network: He asked the group to provide feedback on the communications network. There are some initiatives on the Mississippi Rive that ties into this. This led to a brief discussion the “One River Mississippi Performance Project”. **Soileau** said that the producer of this program wants to do a 30-40 minute documentary on this project – not just the dance but also the narrative – topics of importance as well as other visual images. Rebecca discussed the communications network – NECC/ECC, UMRCC, UMRBA. Rebecca read a 1 page document that describes the project. There are 2 months to put together the narrative. Within the next couple of weeks we could have a communication network type meeting where we could come up with the narrative as well as the images to develop this. Can meet tonight to discuss this as well. The producer is Janice Larson. The head of the project is Marylee Hardenbergh. She asked for some volunteers from the NECC/ECC to help her with this project.

Bluhm finished by saying that for this year the plan is to make additional updates to the website, work with the communication network, and get a Program Newsletter out later this summer.

Questions/Comments:

Carr asked if Kevin had seen the Huntington Districts maps and overlays? **Bluhm** replied that yes he had, as well as the Everglades website.

Spitzack said that the long-term of the website is really a blank page. The long-term solution will be to sit down with the communications network to help us mold and shape how big and broad this website shall be.

• **Science Panel Draft Report – Barry Johnson/ John Barko (Attachment X – PowerPoint Slides)**

Barko - The purpose of the 2005 Science Panel (SP) was to expand on the recommendations made from the 2003 Science Panel. Slide 2 - an overview of the SP members. Slide 3 discussed the Regional Support Team (RST). Barko mentioned that Rob Davinroy was replaced by Claude Strauser. Barko mentioned that Chuck Theiling did the major part of the editing to pull the Science Panel Draft Report together. He also mentioned that Sandra Brewer was heavily involved in participation and contributed to several parts of the report. Slide 4 discussed the Science Panel Responsibilities. Slide 5 -General Recommendations made in the Science Panel Draft Report. He discussed the use of the work “Active” in the first bullet of this slide. Active versus passive learning – passive – learn from experience. Active – experimental design. Technical support – John views this as the Science Panel’s most important responsibility. System-scale activities – most activities on the River to date have been project specific. Slide 6 - Goals and Objectives – a River Council is very important to developing system level objectives – Science Panel and all stakeholders should work together to develop these. Slide 7- Monitoring – watershed and basin. Slide 8 - Modeling – it is important to integrate available models and see if they can account for feedback. Slide 9– Sequencing – this was very difficult. Important to recruit sequencing protocols when system goals and objectives are developed. Slide 10 – Ecosystem Goods and Services. Slide 11 – Report Card – report card will have to be developed to the different audiences.

Questions/Comments:

Benjamin – The SP has been stood- up for a year and has produced a report. Where does the SP see themselves now? **Barko** said that he had a list of taskers for FY06 – these should be in the November NECC/ECC minutes as well as in the Science Panel Draft Report. **Benjamin** said that this is a more relationship question – how will the SP relate to the A-team – will they provide feedback on sequencing? **Barko** listed some of the taskers – development of the Decision Support System – this will require spending a lot of time with people – what information is needed to make decisions –

Graphic, GIS, data...another is that we want to formalize interactions with the PDTs – formal project review. This is not only with the PDTs, but also with the various river teams. **Barr** said that working with the River teams is a very important aspect of the Science Panel. **Barko** continued – need to develop system-wide sequencing criteria – cannot do that until we develop a system-wide vision – what needs to be changed – how do we view the river 10, 15, and 50-years from now. All the various teams need to work with the SP. The SP will help to influence doable criteria into this.

Benjamin said that earlier in this talk it seemed as though it was presented as an either or scenario – either we protect what we have or we restore things. She does not feel this is true – we can do both. **Barko** replied that politically we can do both – however, with a limited budget, we need to decide what do we want to do with our limited resources.

Duyvejonck said that there was a lot of expectation that the SP would tell us what those system-wide objectives are. How does this figure into the conceptual model? **Barko** replied that there is a conceptual model from the 2003 Science Panel that needs to be tweaked. The SP worked on this a lot, but it will take more work. **Barr** added that these conceptual models, in combination with the SET (Systems Evaluation criteria) help facilitate good discussion. **Clevenstine** added that we need to get the Conceptual models out of the report and into the planning phase. He added that what he heard in Gretchen's questions was still some misconception of what the SP is. Do they still think we are a ruling body? Not sure how to get the correct message out. **Benjamin** said that this miscommunication is that the groups aren't working together yet, so there is some concern that certain teams may fall of the table. She knows this isn't the truth; but, for example, the A-Team isn't mentioned anywhere. Until people start to work together there will still be mistrust. **Barr** said that co-locating the SP and the A-team for some meetings would be good.

Schlagenhaft said that he was hoping for more recommendations. In his mind the SP should take a more leadership role. He would like the Report to list out the goals and objectives, the sequencing criteria, and the monitoring objectives. Let us stew on the recommendations. **Barko** said that we have to have systemic goals in place first. Such as reduce nitrogen flux by 30% below St. Louis – then we can do that. **Schlagenhaft** If we can identify the system need for the bird resting areas – then we can let the PDTs design them. **Barko** agreed. He also mentioned the Pool Plans – those can be used to develop system goals and objectives. **Lubinski** added that we are struggling to make progress on systemic goals and objectives because of they way they are meeting – Science Panel tends to meet separate from the PDT. When they met with the Fish Passage PDT they made great strides. He felt that in this year's goals for the SP's was to finalize Goals and Objectives and focus on meeting with the PDTs.

McCalvin asked, until we have the River Management Council (RMC), which groups help to make these decisions? **Barr** said that until there is a RMC the

NECC/ECC will provide NESP input, other teams will be part of making systemic recommendations.

Barry Johnson said that the SP views itself as an advisory group. This report is the results of the efforts from the first year – so only 200 hours of effort. These are the recommendations from the first effort – recommendations to whom is a good question. Goals and Objectives is a good goal for this year. Once this gets fully funded we expect to be putting a lot more time into this.

Beorkrem – Ecological Services – how do you see this playing out in the development of Goals and Objectives? When we start to move from pure biological objective to cultural values – how do we pull this together? **Barko** – ecological services should be integral to the development of broad scale systemic goals to the river. There is some commentary to this effect in the Science Panel Draft Report. Saying that we want more fish in the UMR-IWW doesn't sit well to people in Wyoming. However, primary production and reducing greenhouse gases is more understood by everyone. **Beorkrem** asked if it was possible to do a NECC workshop with people who are doing work with Ecological Service? **Barr** said that there will be a workshop with SP and IWR/others – but the NECC would be welcome to attend. **Barko** Corps R&D has been told to look at evaluation associated with environmental improvements. **Smith** said this is an IWR initiative. **Barko** agreed and said that maybe we could make some inputs to this activity. **Barr** said that he felt that the group had an overall agreement that “goods and services” is an important area to go. Is this correct? **Beorkrem** said that he noted that transportation was under cultural services – but other parts of transportation could fit under provisional services. He felt that the Millennium Report may not fit perfectly within this. Navigation can be producing goods and services as well as recreation. How much do we value recreational uses of the river? **Barko** said that further developing an understanding of ecological services is a major bullet for this year. **Benjamin** asked him how much it would cost to do this. **Barko** replied that identifying these goods and services will be easy to do. Putting dollar values to this will be difficult. **Lubinski** said that right now the important thing to do is to recognize that if this will work in 10-years – we need to not have some scientist in a room doing this, we need to have a large team of folks working together to do this. The first step is to bring those working on this together and figure out how we are going to communicate. **Barr** added that hopefully the PDTs can link our actions to benefits gained. There are some good tools out there that we can bring to the table. **Carr** said that it would be good to bring in people from Oakridge, and TVA. We have a Forest Service model for recreation impact. All this relates to employment... for large or small areas. If you do a project in one area of the county it takes away from other areas of the river. **Barko** said that this was a good idea. **Beorkrem** added that FWS people from DC would also be good. National Hunting and Fishing Statistics – bring in those modelers who have an idea of the inputs. **Carr** agreed – gather all the models that have been used – understand their differences. Pick from that array of models. There is some NETS work going on in this as well. Somehow we need to be connecting all these people to get the best

product. We do have a simple model used in the Bruce Carlson work – it is easy and understandable.

Stoerker asked what is the practical aspect of Ecological Goods and Services? **Carr** said it would be much like Regional Economic Development (RED) – the States might want this – what’s in a particular project for us, why should we support this. Outputs might be spin-off jobs. **Barr** said according to Corps Policy this is additional evaluations metrics that can be used. **Smith** said that there has been a push to compare ecological goods and services because it make it easier for decision makers at a national level. **Lubinski** added that a lot of scientists are using this because it helps people to understand the importance of ecosystems. There are certainly particular sectors that want to use this for comparisons and cost and benefits. One of the first things we will have to do is to decide who will use this. **Barko** said that ecological goods and services are important because we wouldn’t be here if we didn’t have a sustained environment. He doesn’t care if we put an economic value to this. There are certain aspects of the environment that have to be maintained. Period. **Carr** said that it is easier to sell if we put it in terms of dollars and cents – tax/income.

Fenedick – indicator/Report card development. Is the SP still planning to reach out to experts to develop this? TMDL’s and Water Quality - EPA was hoping to participate in these subject discussions. **Clevenstine** said that the SP Report Card workgroup will be reaching out to others to do this. When we include an agency representative in our group we expect that representative to reach back to their agency and pull on all of their experts. He would like to see the report card reflect goods and services as well. This program will be evaluated by the whole federal participation in this program and if the program is being productive.

Spitzack – Recommendation of the System Level PDT. We are working on the RMC,SP, and other system level PDTs such as institutional arrangements. So what does this recommendation need? **Barko** said that originally the SP has been working as the System Level PDT, but realized that they couldn’t be that group. They are looking for recommendations as to how this PDT is defined and who should be a part of this PDT. **Spitzack** said that this is more conceptual – more a process? **Barko** agreed. A representative from the pool planning team, and from each river resource forum – as well as other agencies should work with the Science Panel to brainstorm about the goals and objectives. **Spitzack** summarized – have a problem and come up with a team surrounding that problem.

Barr summarized – Better define relationships with the other river teams. Ken asked for any specific thoughts on this? He asked them to all think about this and bring this up later in the day. More examples in the report to clarify what we are talking about. Comments due March 10th. Near-term Science panel activities– March/April Goods and Services workshop. Meeting to discuss mussels in terms of drawdown. Science Panel will meet again with the Fish passage PDT as well as to discuss the DSS and plan formulation.

Stoerker asked how do we comment on Science Panel Report – we can like it, hate it, but ultimately it is the Science Panel’s report. How do we comment on this? **Barr** replied that some of this is a summary of the last year, but you can comment on the technical aspects of the report as well as the plan for next year. **McCalvin** said that the comments are more to the decision makers on the Science Panel recommendations. **Barko** said this is a progress report. If you don’t like the progress we are making – you need to tell us that. **Barr** – send comments to McVay or Barr.

- **Fish Passage – Mark Cornish/ Tamara Atchley (Attachment X –PowerPoint Slides)**

Mark began by discussing the Fish Passage PDT’s meeting with the Science Panel. The goals for the first meeting with Science Panel were to discuss ways to measure change, quantification of benefits, and goals and objectives. Slide 4 listed the SP’s recommendations. Slide 6, Mark mentioned that Barry Johnson had recommended conducting telemetry experiments including the pools upstream and down stream of the pools where the fish passage is – need to have baseline conditions. Slide 7 – when using modeling we need to document assumptions as well as results. Slide 8 – the non-constructed features are very important as these can be applied to other locks and dams – and may also be used before the structures can be constructed. Barry Johnson thought that one of the more important aspects of the fish passage is the orientation of the opening. Working with ways to build experimental design into this, one way is to phase construction. By building the downstream entrance first and running test flows through it, it is possible to demonstrate that it is sited in a place where fish will use it. **Barr** discussed the Fish Passage/Science Panel workshop. He said that the PDT had sent out read-ahead materials to the SP. Mark and Tamara had a four hour presentation, so the PDT and SP started with a shared understanding. The whole workshop was a day and a half. The SP put together an 8 page report – this is what Mark was just discussing. The PDT’s responses to this will be published as another report. We are building on the recommendations of the PDT, with input from the Science Panel. **Barry Johnson** added that fish passage has possible systemic effects. This is a situation where we need systemic goals and objectives. We didn’t have this for the system. We need to spend a lot of time working with the PDTs to begin to develop these.

Cornish continued with their monitoring plan. Monitoring is over 40% of our funding for this year. Anticipate monitoring for at least 10-years. Slide 11 – fixed station Hydroacoustic monitoring, the team is designing this layout this year. Problems – no good way to monitor movements over the spillway. Slide 13 – 2006 telemetry – This is a stylized diagram of the river. The team is working with Travis Moore (MODOC) and Jim Garvy (IL). We are going to try some Skip Jack herring – these are very fragile fish and will most likely die from handling – but important to attempt this, as they are a keystone species. Slide 16 –LD22 2005 Hydroacoustic monitoring results. Each dot represents fish that are graded into 10-inch size groups. The yellow dots on the slide represent fish 40 inches or greater in length. There is a seasonal change. Be careful when looking at the numbers of the population estimate as they may not be statistically different. Slide 17 -Mel Price – no open river

conditions at this dam. The team also collected velocity and bathymetry measurements during these sampling sessions. We would also like to get some side scan sonar data if possible.

Questions/Comments:

Woman in back (was this Alison Horton??) – asked about the FERC permit for placing electrical generators in the gate bays at Mel Price– would that info be available for fish passage? **Atchley** said that this team is in communication with the Project Manager for the FERC permit. The gate bays are not where we are proposing fish passage. However, the hydropower project could change flow patterns. The Mel Price Fish Passage PDT will work with that project, should it move forward.

Lubinski - asked about future sequencing. **Cornish** the initial recommendation of 4,8,22, and 26, with initial design of 19.. **Lubinski** asked if the goals and objectives steered the group toward the types of fish species to focus monitoring? **Cornish** showed his list of species – Skipjack Herring is directly from Science Panel. Paddlefish is a recommendation of the MODOC. He said he'd appreciate any other inputs that people have. **Beorkrem** asked what the projected cost of this year would be. **Cornish** replied that this year was \$70K. That was why they did this type of monitoring. Brian Johnson asked why this telemetry wasn't being done at Mel Price?

Cornish said that they wanted to do a system study but that there was not enough money to tag fish below Mel Price this year. He said that Ron Brooks with Southern Illinois University and USGS in Columbia are doing similar studies in the open river. **Keevin** stated that there are pallid sturgeon that Corps pays for tagging with Biological Opinion. MSU also does paddlefish. **Cornish** said that they had 250,000 fish below the dam, but only can tag 150 fish. Tags will be going in this spring. Bob Hrabeck said the Missouri DOC will be tracking shovelnose and pallid sturgeon on the Middle Mississippi and that this data will be available. **Mike Steuck** – How often will the SP be able to give that type of feedback when things get busy. **Barr** said this will be the primary focus of the SP this year. If the funds increase, then the SP activities will be increased as well. **Barry Johnson** said that it may be important to look at techniques – Island Building etc. Discuss those techniques – then work with individual PDTs when necessary.

Stoerker asked to discuss LD 22 fish passage and Lock Expansion. **Barr** replied that they are aware of each other and trying to share data where possible – H&H, geotechnical...etc. **Cornish** added that they are working this as a reach – went out to public meetings together, send out information with both projects.

- **Mitigation Activities – Mark Cornish (Attachment X –PowerPoint Slides)**

Slide 2 – Main Channel Trawling – Discussed the Navigation Study's original entrainment study. Comments from the original Kilgore study are being used to change this year's study. The study will be using a 15-tow configuration (previous study used 3 unloaded barges – as this was thought to be the worst case scenario). The study is also using a different mesh size for the net, which should be able to determine net mortality vs. entrainment mortality. Slide 4 – The study will use larger

weights (tom weights) to hold the net in place over the propellers than those used in the previous study. Using a Class B tow – bigger boat than last time. Industry is using Class B boats more because they can navigate pooled and unpooled reaches of the river. Issues: The team must address all safety issues that the barge company has. Slide 5 - Potential locations – 5 sites, 4 sampling time. December sampling may or may not happen based on success of deploying net. Slide 6 - There are some safety concerns – boat cannot go in reverse – if the net is sucked in, boat will be disabled and will be free floating. This will be very difficult sampling. The Coast Guard will be issuing a Moving Safety Zone.

Questions/Comments:

Beorkrem asked about the river habitat conditions for fisheries of the 5 sampling locations? Has Science Panel looked at this? **Cornish** replied that the Science Panel has not looked at this specifically – the 2 previous studies had extensive comments – hopefully this will answer some of those concerns. With respect to habitat – one comment was to do nighttime sampling. The team would like to do this, but due to safety concerns we may not be able to do this. **Barr** told the SP they were not tasked to look at the last 12 years of mitigation studies. **Beorkrem** asked if they would keep track of river miles sampled. **Cornish** said yes. The barges will be full (therefore sitting lower in the water). If they cannot sample a full reach, we hope to do sub samples. **Keevin** added that sampling will only be in the upstream direction due to nets floating into the prop in downstream direction. However, upstream direction is the worst case scenario because boats use more power.

Cornish continued by discussing the Submerged Aquatic Vegetation (SAV) monitoring activities. Slide 7 he has not released the draft 2005 SAV report to NECC/ECC due to errors in report – GIS errors. We should have a clean report at the end of February and then will share with the NECC. Slide 8 and 9 - FY06 will have fewer sites surveyed. Bathymetry will only be collected where we have holes in the data. Once we have the results back in Feb – we should be able to determine the FY06 sites and get it back to NECC in April.

Questions/Comments: None.

- **Draft Reach Plan Report – Hank DeHaan (Attachment X –PowerPoint Slides)**

Slide 2 - There are 3 Reach Plan teams: Harlow Reach (Johnson and Gates); Pool 5 (Hendrickson); and Pool 18 (Theiling and DeHaan). Slide 4-6 show the individual working– including state resource agencies. There are 47 team members in total. Slide 8 – Reach Planning – Monitoring funding is mostly focused in the Harlow Reach area. Monitoring – Pool 5 – water quality, Harlow – bathymetry.. Pool 18. Slide 11 - Ecosystem Objective Refinement – the teams looked at sub-areas – and determined what the main objective was for that sub area. The Pool 18 team went from 155 objectives in the Environmental Objectives Database to 25 primary objectives. Many of those objectives were working on loss of habitat, but the team also looked at gap analysis. Slides 12 and 13– The Interim Report is really a historical document of what happened in FY05. The importance is not just the

recommended planning process – but also the learning that we have gone through to accomplish this. We won't be able to follow the same kind of planning process in every part of the river. Slide 14– FY06 schedule – Going to concentrate on the process rather than developing the perfect implementation or monitoring plan. Plan on having a public meeting in conjunction with other public meetings that maybe going on in that reach.

Questions/Comments:

Barr asked if the report would be out to the NECC in 30 days. **DeHaan** agreed. **Lubinski** asked about the length of the plan. **DeHaan** said that this is a 15-year plan. **Naramore** asked if you had given a back of the envelope estimate – how long to get through the planning process? **Barr** said that once we've learned the steps, we will not continue with individual pools, but more look at geomorphic reaches (groups of pools). **Schlagenhaft** asked about the process since the Science Panel has not established systemic goals and objectives. We should be looking at systemic objectives first and then see what we can do this locally. **Barko** said that he agrees, but that the reach planning process is 1-3 years, so there is time to take the Science Panel recommendations into the process. **DeHaan** added that this is not static – through Adaptive Management the team can take changes in to consideration. **Stoerker** asked if these plans are beyond NESP. **Barr** said that O&M and FWS are taken into consideration. **DeHaan** said the teams are trying to stay way from NESP specific objectives, instead they are identifying the needs and then identify what agency/program can get it done. **Spitzack** asked if the partnerships with the agencies have been effective? **DeHaan** – said yes – good attendance and good participation.

- **11:30 break for lunch.**
- **NETS Activities – Jack Carr (Attachment X – PowerPoint Slides)**

Survey Model (Implementation of Mid-American Grain Study) Slides 1-12 (See the slides for the script read during the slide presentation)

Survey Model is the shippers' response to rate change- just for grain. Slide 5 - If you divide the % switching by the % rate increase you are getting elasticities higher than the feasibility study. **Barko** asked if Jack or someone else know what was causing the inflection points as seen in the MAGS chart developed by NETS. **Carr** didn't know, but agreed to follow up on this topic at the next NECC/ECC. **Schlagenhaft** referred to the ASA report to Congress – it talked about the Shipper survey and another model to evaluate the need for expansion. Is this what we are talking about here? **Carr** said this is the shipper survey. He said the survey is up on the internet – this is a 100 page report, and is not an easy read. He added that the NECC/ECC can provide comments on this report to himself or Nicole McVay and he will get them to Keith Hofseth. **Barr** said that as you report back to your agencies, please note that this is ongoing, and assure you have the right people working on this. This is defiantly a systemic issue – does not easily track to a small group like the RRAT – The River Council will need to have the expertise to be able to deal with these kinds of issues. **Naramore** asked about the shippers survey...were they asked about how they would respond to

theoretical changes in prices? Is this a normal method? **Carr** replied yes, though he didn't have the questions with this. In the Navigation Study models, elasticity was assumed; a survey is a more accurate way to get this. The survey was done by Ken Train and Wes Wilson. **Worthington** said that his understanding that this was an interim step to more spatially specific data. **Carr** said that it is his impression that is a very long-term goal. **Worthington** continued that when the Secretary talks about economic reevaluation using new data he assumes that we would not use this survey data as part of the economic reevaluation. **Carr** said that once this data becomes final it would be very hard to ignore. He said that a change in direction on the NETS research is not likely unless other input was received upon review of this draft report. **Worthington** asked how does the worldwide grain study fit into this. **Barr** from the study team perspective – as these new models become available we will look to see which applications are appropriate for this study. Taking one new grain estimate and plugging it into an old model probably does not meet our needs. However, it was not foreseen that new models would be years away.

Stoerker asked about the possibility of a Navigation/Economic Science Panel. Do we have an independent body to look at this? **Spitzack** said that he would hope that the PDTs would bring in regional technical experts to evaluate how the NETS products would apply to the NESP. **Barr** said this does not apply to the current Ecosystem Science Panel; it would be a separate effort. **Barko** said that while he does not know much about economics he does know about curves. Attitudes change to questions asked over time. If you would have asked me if I would every pay \$2.50/gallon for gas I would have said absolutely not – but now my response changes.

Determining System Capacity (Slides 13-24 – see script in slides)

Carr said that this study will be sent out to the NECC/ECC for review and comment (was sent out on 2/27 by N. McVay).

Questions/Comments:

Sternburg asked -what if doing all these economic studies results in the uncertainty still being there? **Barr** replied that we will hopefully reduce uncertainty down the road as we continue with these studies. Additional work will continue to be done to feed into the future enhanced spatial economic model

Closure Event Studies at Lock 27(Slides 25-41 – see script in slides)

These surveys are funded by NETS and coordinated with Great Lakes Ohio Division/District. They will also survey an unplanned closure if/when that happens. If we get an unplanned closure we will be in good shape survey-wise, because we are getting good responses from the shipper survey.

Questions/Comments:

Stoerker asked if this study is for NETS? **Carr** said yes. **Barr** asked about why we are interested in this information – what is the fit. **Carr** said this is more of a calibration – cost of delays. What do shippers do? What their responses are.

- **Water Level Fluctuations on the Illinois River – Kevin Landwehr (Attachment X –PowerPoint Slides)**

Landwehr said that the PDT has asked the Program Management Team (PMT) to put this project on hold for now.

Slide 2: Assume perfect knowledge of incoming flows. However, does not take wind induced fluctuations nor water used during a lockage into account.

Slide 3: Average Annual Hydrograph – Note large fluctuations throughout the year. There is very little storage capacity within our (Corps') operation capabilities. The smoothing does not stop the large scale fluctuations, which are a result of watershed response to rainfall. Instead, the smoothing targets way that we handle these changes. Can we get the benefits we want just by operating the dam gates –smoothing. Based upon MACTEC survey, the large scale fluctuations are what is limiting the aquatic plant beds. Stranding of Aquatic Organisms – little evidence that this is a major impact. The fluctuation that we are talking about are less frequent but about the same magnitude of barge drawdown effects. Isolation of Backwaters – again the large 10ft changes are the major impacts. The PDT recommends that the NESP hand this back to the IL River Restoration Program because they have a plan to address some of the watershed issues that are making this goal very difficult.

Landwehr noted that this study did not address wicket operations – that may be looked at beyond the initial 15-years of the NESP.

He said he is looking for concurrence that this is an acceptable solution.

Questions/Comments:

Barry Johnson asked about the annual graph – is the monthly bump basically rainfall events? **Landwehr** replied that some of this could be from Chicago, however most of those effects dissipate by Peoria Pool, so this is mostly an effect from local watershed events. **???** asked if this was a concern for navigation. **Landwehr** replied that the 9-foot channel is maintained – however, it does cause problems for some operations and maintenance.

Barr asked for agency comments on the recommendation of tabling this project by handing the watershed aspects to IR519? **Benjamin** asked how long it would take before we see any biological changes – how long are we tabling this? **Barr** replied that there may be more efforts in the long-term project, beyond the 15 years.

However, we will have to wait and see what changes are made in the watersheds.

Landwehr said that this study effects the recommendations and quantification of benefits of the IR519. **Kincaid** said that there will be public meetings in March.

Benjamin asked what will happen programmatically if we shelve this project? **Barr** said this will not affect FY06 funds distribution. Also, this was not a very expensive project in terms of the 15-year plan..

Barr asked again if there were any members who had an objection to this. There were none.

- **Pool 11 Islands – Ken Barr (Attachment X –PowerPoint Slides)**

Barr gave a brief historic briefing of the project. Slide 3 shows diving transects – 1600 individuals – 26 species, good age class distribution. 8 Higgins eye in total – little green numbers shows Higgins eye. Also had state listed T&E. Density 3-20/m². If islands are built, it will impact a healthy and diverse mussel bed. It will impact federally endangered species. The Corps met with FWS and refuges last week. FWS cannot support this project as proposed. Right now the best direction for this is to have the PDT meet with both the SP and the Mussel Coordination Team. Have a workshop with the Science Panel – possibly include drawdown issues as well. Options – we have developed a few – no one thinks it would be prudent to go with large islands – possibly a seed island or small island complex. The main basis for this would be to learn something from it. Island AB is the least dense area. If we can do a seed island and let the natural process take over – see if the natural fauna moves with the natural processes of sedimentation.

Questions/Comments:

Nelson said that we (FWS – RIFO) cannot support this project as proposed, but are open to suggestions and changes to this proposal. **Beorkrem** asked what degree of accuracy to determine deposition rate and changes in flows with hydraulic models. **Landwehr** said that we have 2-dimensional models for emergent dikes – we have the model in place from when we did the first study of Pool 11 islands for EMP. **Strauser** said that the physical modeling predicted very well what the chevrons did in the lower pools and open river. He like the chevrons because you can create a lot of habitat diversity depending on heights, material, shapes... he also feels that - we can predict hydraulic effects very accurately. **Barry Johnson** said that we also need to think of our long-term effects of our management practices. The Pool 5 drawdown and this show immediate short-term effects of our actions. We don't know what our long-term effects of our current management regime are. We don't know what these effects will have on mussels in the long-term. Calling this off may be a good idea because of the short-term effects, but we need to design some projects where we can evaluate the long-term effects. **Barko** said that this pool is a very good candidate for increased vegetation, which is very good for mussels since they are detritus feeders. We can also model some of the other effects, like plants. **Benjamin** said that there is a need for some kind of wind fetch barrier. Some years vegetation does OK, but in the long-term this will not be the case. The decision may be not to go ahead with island here, but we have not looked at all alternatives yet. WI would not recommend dropping this project yet. **Barr** said that we are trying to look at raw data from the recent surveys. The islands are supposed to be built in 2 feet of water – we want to make sure that the surveys were done in the correct location. **Benjamin** asked if we found a potential project could we move mussels? **Nelson** replied that there are other developers that want to move mussels – river terminals. We need to be consistent. **Konrad** said that it is important to pursue this project – we are going to keep running into these issues. We need to find solutions for this, not run away. **Barry Johnson** asked if the Corps could mitigate for this? **Barr** replied that we want to look at smart design. The island footprints used to be good squirrel habitat, not good for mussels – however the Corps has a policy for not having mitigation for ecosystem restoration projects. **Theiling** said that there are other ways to reduce waves – there are non-

anchored wave breaks that could be used and then removed when the plants are established. **Schlagenhaft** said that it is important to understand the ecology of mussels – what were the historical natural die-offs? We need to put significant efforts to gather this information

- **Stakeholder Reports**

- **Duyvejonck** – UMRCC coordinator, Fisheries program - Scott Yess will be taking over these responsibilities after the next meeting. Jon will be devoting his full time to NESP.
- **Todd Stroll** – TNC introduced himself – UMR program based in St. Louis. Working on Floodplain initiative – works with Doug Blodgett.
- **Deanne Strauser** – CEMVS – looking at the middle Miss communication and keeping situationally aware.
- **Nelson** – FWS has a new director – Dale Hall – career FWS person.
- **Lubinski** said that the last two presentations – ILWW fluctuations and Pool 11 islands showed how the PDTs, and the program, changed your recommendations based on new data – this is refreshing. This is adaptive management.

- **Next Meeting** - plan on meeting as part of the 3 days in May with the UMRBA. Rock Island 4-Points Sheraton May 16-18.