

Final Minutes

**38th Meeting of the NECC
January 28th, 2003
Phone Conference**

**Nicole McVay
(CEMVR-PM-A)**

Environmental Objectives Workshops

Attachment A contains the attendance list.

Barr -The draft reports from the four workshops have been distributed to participants for their review. All comments are due at the end of this week (Jan. 31). Comments will be included in the workshop reports as well as the Draft Green report. The Draft Green report will be an integrated report summarizing all four workshops. The Draft Green report will be distributed during the first week of Feb. to the workshop participants, NECC, GLC and expert panel for a four week review.

NECC members that were not participants of the workshops were not sent draft workshops reports.

Duvejone – What about the Atlas Maps?

DeHaan – The Atlas Maps will be part of the integrated reports. They will be distributed in a PDF format. They will contain all site-specific objectives with icon numbers and tables.

Unknown (Johnson?) – We need to look into the future and think about creating a 4-5 page document that summarizes the different tiered goals and objectives. We may have to wait until the expert panel has submitted their final report.

Expert Panel

Barko – It took a while to get the group going. One challenge was overlying the tier 3 goals to the tier 2 goals. Chuck Theiling is facilitating this. We discussed Essential Ecosystem Characteristics (EEC). They tie goals and objectives to disturbance effects and management measures.

Lubinski – The panel went a long way to achieving its first task. We tried to group the goals and objectives in the EEC (From Harwell’s Everglades report). A group of items that the public, stakeholders and scientist can agree are important. (**Attachment B** contains some PowerPoint slides from Ken Lubinski that detail the EEC’s).

The panel looked at many of the goals and objectives. The panel’s role of amending the goals and objectives won’t be done until the synthesis report is written.

Barr –

- Attendance – All panel members attended the workshops. Karl Korschgen was only able to attend the second day.
- Participation was excellent.
- Overall – We discussed the notion of sustainability
 - We discussed the Grumbine tier two goals
 - We discussed pool-wide and reach-wide objectives and looked at various ways to organize them.

- We were able to take the UMRCC's *Working River* and relate them to the Grumbine Tier 2 goals. The panel then nested the objectives underneath these goals. This will be part of the Green Report.
- Sustainability – Considerable discussion of self-sustaining vs. managed sustainability. Concerned about life-cycle costs (fish over wintering hole at mouth of tributary is not cost effective). The panel will put into words that the 9-foot channel project is highly managed and that some environmental “operation and maintenance” will be necessary. This will be shared with stakeholders. Objectives are not tied to a specific time in the past (historic baseline). We are not trying to restore to a historic condition. There is a need to understand history and how the system arrived at its current condition, but the objective line does not reflect any historical point in the past.
- Planning Process – Will have 2 parts.
 - Traditional Planning process that compares future environment under current operating conditions (referred to as without project condition) with alternative restoration plans (with project conditions). Look at cost vs. benefits.
 - Look at gap between with project and the objective line. Likely, there will always be a gap.

We will have to get this clearly stated before review by NSA and others.

Objective lines will be created from the objectives established with stakeholders at the workshops.

Benjamin – Will we come up with an ultimate condition with projects?

Barr – This will be one investment strategy. How much can we expect to accomplish? We understand that not all of the objectives will be met. That is why we need a good monitoring strategy. We need to define each gap as we try to narrow it.

Brescia – How do we get from very broad, unconstrained objectives to achievable objectives?

Barr – The expert panel will review the ecology and physics of the objectives. They feel the stakeholder objectives are a good starting point. Areas that have problems will be worked through the expert panel weeding things out and with the conceptual model.

Lubinski – The expert panel hasn't reached consensus as to whether self-sustainability is achievable or not.

Barko – The Corps' definition of sustainability is a balance of the environment with navigation, so it is accepted that both purposes need to be balanced. Self-sustainability won't happen. Some processes will be more sustainable than others. Which processes needing continuous monitoring will need to be sorted out. We will never be in a stable state. Some objective will need more time and money.

Duvejonec – John Nestler is going to review the various definitions of sustainability from the literature as well as historic baseline concepts used elsewhere.

Barko- Mark Bain (Cornell Univ) will be helping in that effort

Adaptive Management Measures (Report Card)

Clevenstine – Mark Bain discussed environmental indicators and how they can be used by future generation to assess our success.

Barko – I will send you (**Clevenstine**) the article about the report card.

Need reasonably measurable metrics for indicators and a Performance evaluation plan.

Lubinski – After the feasibility is done we are planning on measuring indicators on report cards to make future decisions. This area is still a little fuzzy.

Barr – This is adaptive management. A good report card is an essential component of this.

Brescia – We need to ensure that the Planning and Monitoring is structured to allow for new ideas to move forward and be tested.

Benjamin – Are we going to be moving further away from trend data monitoring and more toward targeted applied research?

Barr – As recommended, Management Actions will be tied to what we are manipulating. So, this means we will need a more targeted response monitoring.

Benjamin – It is important that this targeted monitoring will enhance, rather than replace trend monitoring. We need to know what is out there.

Barr – Here is the schedule for the next Expert Panel sessions:

- 2nd Conceptual Model - (Davenport, IA, Feb 25-26) Will meet with the NECC on the 25th
- 3rd Management Actions – (La Crosse, WI, Mar 19-20)
- 4th Summary Draft Report – (Davenport, IA, April 22) Will meet with the full NECC/ECC

Johnson – The third meeting dates overlap with the UMRCC meeting.

Agenda for the next NECC Meeting

The next NECC meeting will be in Davenport, IA, from noon Feb 24th through noon Feb 25th.

- Discussion points with the expert panel
 - Nesting Goals
 - Conceptual Models
 -

Lubinski

- Distinguish goals and objectives for the entire ecosystem and those that fit in with the Navigation Study.
- Understand what the expert panel can do versus that the stakeholders need to do.

Barr

- The Corps has been working with GIS to develop the Navigation study evaluation Zone. We will target management actions in that zone.

We will get the description of the navigation evaluation zone out in the read-ahead material for the NECC meeting.

The draft agenda will be out earlier than this one.

Other Business

Clevenstine – Is there any trepidation from the NECC concerning the expert panel?

Benjamin – I hope that this group will validate and sanction our work. I hope they will provide additional ideas to help us get the best products possible.

Duveyjone – I am encouraged by the discussion about sustainability. We are not striving toward a natural state but for balance between navigation and the environment. It will cost lots of money to sustain an artificial ecosystem. It will help us to document the fact that it is not realistic to try for a self-sustaining ecosystem.

Barr – I was very excited to see how Farabee, Nakato, and Korschgen, who know the river, interacted with the other members of the panel.

Beorkrem – FWS and the Corps on O&M effects?

Barr- We are pulling together a 404-study draft report that will be out sometime in mid-Feb. Water level control and fish passage working groups are continuing.

Wilcox – The fish passage draft report will be out sometime in June.

Johnson – I plan to attend the next meeting, but I don't know if the Governor will pay for travel.

Duveyjone – Institutional Arrangements working group.

- There was a conference call yesterday. We agreed to meet and discuss it more.
- Some people felt this discussion was too early, others did not.
- We will pursue some aspects.
- Look at existing forums that might work.
- Will review the role of EMP and LTRMP
- The group can address some issues now, but some will have to be worked out later.

Attachment A

Attendance List
NECC Meeting 28 January 2003
Phone Conference

Name	Affiliation	Address	Phone	E-mail
Butch Atwood	ILDNR - Fisheries	1000 Killarney Dr Greenville, IL 62246		eatwood@dnrmail.state.il.us
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Ken Lubinski	USGS-UMESC	575 Lester Ave Onalaska, WI 54650	608.783.7550 x61	Ken_lubinski@usgs.gov
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Attachment B

Revised Navigation Feasibility Study

Expert Panel Workshop #1 (1/22-23/03):

UMR Ecosystem Goals and Objectives

Day 2:

Essential Ecosystem Characteristics

Essential Ecosystems Characteristics (EEC's)

Reasons why to include EEC's in Feasibility Plan –

- they link G/O's to Conceptual Model
- communication value (scientists <> decision makers, public)
- provides discussion points for Corps to partners with others
- clarification of uncertainties, relationships to indicators and measures
- they help forward science ideas
- they facilitate parsimony
- they ease memory problems for old farts

Reasons to Not include –

- They are new
- They require more work
- They add words

Draft list of EEC's (1/22/ 03)

1. Biota
2. Habitat
3. Water Quality
4. Hydrology
5. Geomorphology
6. Energetics
7. Biogeochemistry

8. ??? Disturbances
9. ??? Basin Services

Test Questions:

Can we associate each EEC with

- drivers?
- stressors?
- indicators?
- metrics?

Do they increase comfort?

Do they help facilitate science support
of the Feasibility Study?

???? EEC's

Disturbances:

Disturbances refer to

- not just attributes.
- not just drivers.

but driver-attribute relationships.

Basin Services:

Rivers provide more than just "in-house" ecosystem services.

They play ecological roles within larger systems (basins):

migratory corridors

assimilative capacity

material transport

Linear islands of habitat (in the Midwestern
Sea of Agriculture)

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Linking a Conceptual Model to Management

Adaptive Management Framework

Goals

Objectives

Essential Ecosystem Characteristics

Endpoints

measures

Conceptual Model Of Causal Relationships

Drivers

Stressors

Effects

Attributes

