

Minutes of State Interagency Missouri River Authority
Department of Natural Resources Conference Room 4W
Des Moines March 11, 2010

Members Present: Amy Christensen, Harold Hommes, Stan Peterson, Jessica Montana and Bernie Hoyer. Also present: Kevin Knepper, Emiliano Lerda, John Fleig, John Olson, and Bill Ehm.

The meeting began at 1:00 PM.

A. Review/Approve Minutes from January 6, 2009: The draft minutes were approved.

B. Review MoRAST Agenda Action Items for March 16, 2010 Meeting:

There were no comments on the MoRAST October 29-30 minutes. Peterson asked if the DOT payment was reflected in the Treasurer's report. Hoyer answered 'yes'. There were no objections to the slate of MoRAST officer candidates. All members present expressed their confidence, trust, and strong desire to have Hoyer represent Iowa and run for the MoRAST Board. All members present expressed their confidence, trust, and strong desire to have Hoyer represent Iowa and run for the MoRAST Board.

Peterson suggested that Iowa should have an officer. Hoyer replied that he had been contacted for an office, but that he had declined because of possible conflicts resulting from current state travel restrictions. There were no objections to the proposed FY 2012 budget, which was unchanged from the current budget. Regarding the proposed 2010 MoRAST Congressional action plan, Hoyer noted two specific actions that were proposed that the Authority might want to discuss: support for continued federal appropriations going towards the Missouri River Authorized Purposes Study and a request for congressional changes in language that would allow the Corps to pay travel expenses for MRRIC and MRERP representatives. SIMRA voted 4-1 (Hommes) to support the proposal for continued MRAPS funding even though Iowa did not originally support the 108 study. The rationale seemed to be that as long as MRAPS is going forward, Iowa will attempt to take an active role in making our beneficial uses a part of the considerations within MRAPS. The group all agreed that the travel support for MRRIC and MRERP were good steps. The Draft Questions and Issues document of MoRAST was discussed briefly. Hoyer noted that it included language supporting MRAPS consideration of Mississippi River issues. Finally, there was general support among the Authority for the potential use of video conferencing, webcasts and other media to replace some MoRAST quarterly meetings. Following the SIMRA actions, Hoyer may vote affirmatively to all potential MoRAST actions listed above. (It should be noted that no discussion occurred regarding two potential actions: tribal reimbursement policy and a MRAPS Guidance on MoRAST Scoping Process.)

C. Discuss Development of an Iowa Vision for the Missouri River Corridor: Peterson handed out an updated draft of the Missouri River Corridor Vision Plan. The amended draft included suggestions by Montana. Most were designed to clarify the items addressed and define them more clearly. One issue that was discussed was the extent of this plan: the river or the river corridor. It was determined to be the river corridor. Another discussed topic was how we might utilize newer media, including the web and social media sites, to involve more Iowans and especially younger Iowans in the planning process. Following discussion, Peterson said he would make further changes based on the discussion. It was determined that Hoyer should contact the Corps to invite someone to our group to discuss specifically how the MRAPS is being conducted and especially how Iowa's vision might interface with it. After Peterson makes updates to the Draft Vision Plan, it will be shared with the Corps. There was discussion about the Osprey Group's confidential phone interviews. Hommes,

Peterson, Christensen and Hoyer were all interviewed. Hommes said that there was concern about the transparency of the MRAPS process, perhaps highlighted by the confidential interviews. Following some discussion, it was clear that the Osprey Group is simply attempting to advise the Corps on how to involve people in MRAPS. Osprey's report to the Corps is due in early April. Public scoping will begin this summer, and Hoyer has learned that a public scoping meeting is planned for the Quad Cities within the Upper Mississippi Basin. Hoyer brought along a table constructed from The Missouri River Ecosystem, NRC, 2002 from Corps data dating back to 1994-1996 about beneficial uses of the Mississippi. From the data, it was clear that energy production and flood damage reduction are clearly the largest public benefits of the river as it is today. Among the states, Iowa apparently receives the second largest monetized benefit from the river as it is managed today. Peterson and Christensen expressed appreciation for the look at data. Christensen cautioned that SIMRA doesn't want to get caught up in 'upstream-downstream' controversies in our visioning process. Rather, she said, we want to focus on mutual benefits within Iowa. May 4&5 were set for the Authorities' visit to the river and for a public meeting. The tour will be in the vicinity of the DeSoto Bend area. Hoyer will work with DNR folks to plan a tour and have a meeting location. Christensen was tasked with determining if Mid American might be able to provide a tour of a power plant on the morning of May 5th.

- D. Public Comments:** The observers present were asked if they had any comments to make, or if they had any observations or information to contribute to the Authorities' discussions.
- a. Kevin Knepper suggested that the vision needs to include a corridor that encompasses the uses' impacted zone. For example, the vision of navigation needs to consider rail rates within some distance outside of the actual Missouri River valley.
 - b. Emiliano Lerda indicated that groups like the Corn Growers wish to work together with us in developing our vision, and he wanted to offer his support for the Authorities' work in water resource management.
 - c. John Olson informed the Authority of extensive Corps documents created about beneficial uses of the river from studies conducted following the drought years of 1988-89. (He later brought several examples for Authority members to view.)
- E. Other Missouri River Meetings:**
- a. Omaha focus meeting on Jan 14, 2010: Montana noted that the time went fast and that perhaps the focus went away from its original purpose (how to do public outreach for MRAPS) and moved more towards issues. Hoyer noted that he mentioned the Authority building an Iowa vision for the river, and the Upper Mississippi River Basin Associations' interest in MRAPS.
 - b. Navigators Meeting in KC: Kevin Knepper indicated that he attended and that plans were underway for more navigation on the river with higher flows. He also noted that the State of Missouri was actively supporting the development of more navigation on the Missouri.
- F. MRRIC:** (Agenda item was skipped over.)
- G. MRERP:** Hoyer reported that technical teams were meeting but that all activities of MRERP are being hurt by travel limitations of state staff.
- H. Adjourn:** The SIMR Authority adjourned at 3:02 PM.