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# Missouri River Ecosystem Restoration Plan Civic Engagement Meetings for Public Scoping Final Report

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**Missouri River Ecosystem Restoration Plan**
**Civic Engagement Meetings for Public Scoping Final Report**

Fall 2009*

Prepared by the U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution

## I. INTRODUCTION

In mid 2009, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) requested the independent and impartial assistance of the U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution (U.S. Institute) in planning, designing, and implementing efforts to build collaborative opportunities with public stakeholders into the development of the Missouri River Ecosystem Restoration Plan (MRERP). To meet this request, the U.S. Institute developed and implemented the Civic Engagement Program (CE). The CE program consisted of a series of public meetings throughout the basin, intended to educate public stakeholders on the MRERP, to gather input on key elements of the Missouri River Ecosystem Restoration Plan, to foster dialogue among public stakeholders, and to help ensure that there were ample opportunities for public involvement as part of the overall public scoping process in the MRERP. Eight CE meetings were held as part of the public scoping process. These meetings occurred between August 18th and October 3rd, 2009 in seven Missouri River basin states: Montana, Missouri, North Dakota, Kansas, South Dakota, Nebraska, and Iowa.

The CE meetings were not designed to be traditional public scoping meetings or hearings, but rather to provide a unique setting allowing for face-to-face discussions with pre-selected participants intended to represent diverse perspectives from the community. The intent of the CE meetings, and of the attached state reports and meeting notes, was to inclusively gather perspectives and opinions from a diverse group of stakeholders with a broad array of interests in the basin, without quantifying, weighing, judging, or prioritizing their views. This report, authored by the U.S. Institute and presented to USACE and FWS for its consideration in the MRERP, describes the CE program, and highlights some of the common themes from the meetings. The summary reports and detailed meeting notes from each of the CE meetings are included in the Attachments and are also submitted to USACE and FWS for consideration.

## II. METHODOLOGY

The following section discusses the methodology used to design, organize and facilitate the MRERP civic engagement meetings.

### a. Civic Engagement Team

The U.S. Institute organized and facilitated the Civic Engagement meetings in partnership with an established network of organizers specializing in providing effective community dialogue and public deliberation. The organizers were selected on a state by state basis and selected on their professional expertise, stakeholder networks, and knowledge of statewide issues. These skills were necessary to enhance impartiality, and generate a sense of fairness and equality to participants in the CE process. Utilizing

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Morris K. Udall Foundation

*Appendix E, the Montana Report, was modified in July 2010 to reflect comments that were missed during the initial production of that report.

state-based organizers also helped leverage local resources and community networks. The meeting organizers included PlaceMatters/University of Montana Center for Natural Resources and Environmental Policy (Montana), South Dakota Public Policy Institute (South Dakota), Consensus Council (North Dakota), Creighton University Werner Institute/University of Nebraska Public Policy Center (Nebraska and Iowa), Kansas State University Institute for Civic Discourse and Democracy (Kansas), and Consensus (Missouri). In addition, MRERP Project Development Team (PDT) staff were consulted with and provided input into the CE process.

**b. Planning Process**

The U.S. Institute managed the overall CE process, and provided the link between the meeting organizers and the MRERP PDT. Each meeting organizer was responsible for organizing and facilitating their respective meeting, identifying and recruiting participants, working with the CE Team on meeting design, and documenting the results of the meeting. The CE team coordinated activities through a series of conference calls, one-on-one discussions, and an internal team website developed by PlaceMatters.

The CE team worked in conjunction with the MRERP PDT to develop a meeting schedule (see Attachment A). Two initial meetings were held in Montana in mid-August on a trial basis to evaluate the CE process, and develop lessons learned to inform and improve future meetings. Following the Montana meetings, the MRERP PDT and MRERP Cooperating Agency Team (CAT) were debriefed, and a decision was made to continue with the remaining six meetings, which occurred between September 17th and October 3rd, 2009.

**c. Meeting Design**

The meetings were designed to encourage meaningful dialogue between a diverse set of public stakeholders from each state, to gather input on key elements of the MRERP scoping process, and to educate the participants on the MRERP. To allow enough time for a thorough discussion, each of the civic engagement meetings was six hours in duration. A common agenda was developed by the CE team to be used at each of the meetings. The agenda may be found in Attachment B.

The meetings included an educational component about the MRERP. At each meeting, a USACE or FWS staff member from the MRERP PDT was present to provide a presentation about the project and to answer any questions from meeting participants. The presentation may be found in Attachment C.

One of the primary purposes of the CE meetings was to gather feedback on three key areas of the MRERP, including: (1) Social, Cultural, and Economic Values, (2) Purpose, Need, and Natural Resource Issues, and (3) Future Visioning Scenarios. This information will be used to inform USACE and FWS about the needs and values of basin communities, and develop a better understanding of how to best incorporate those

needs and values as the plan is developed. To help provide focus and generate feedback on the key areas of importance, the MRERP PDT developed a set of questions that served as the foundation for the meeting agenda. Those questions can be found in Attachment D.

The goal of the CE Program was to generate discussion on similar topics in all of the meetings. Although the questions and discussions were common across all eight meetings, the meeting organizers were encouraged to tailor the exercises to best incorporate their unique styles and experiences. As such, different techniques were utilized at the meetings. For example, while one group met in plenary for all of the discussions, other groups utilized individual reflection, group interviews, paired discussions, small group discussions, or a combination of these approaches. In addition, organizers at two of the meetings used a mapping exercise to encourage thoughts about social, cultural and economic values.

**d. Meeting Participants and Observers**

The CE meetings were open to an invited group of participants and unlimited observers. To encourage a manageable and diverse meeting, organizers targeted between 20 and 40 participants at each location. Participants were identified by the meeting organizers, who were encouraged to utilize their networks, statewide knowledge and professional experience to best identify the appropriate stakeholder representation. Organizers were asked to recruit a diverse set of public stakeholders, with respect to interests, locations and other demographics, and to focus on people with broad communication networks, those that had a connection to the Missouri River, and members of traditionally underserved populations. Observers were encouraged to attend, and were allowed to provide written and verbal comments near the conclusion of the meeting.

Recruiting techniques varied. Some organizers relied on inviting participants from their professional and university networks. Others identified primary organizations to ask for recommendations. One organizer contacted Chambers of Commerce and county extension service agencies in all of the contiguous Counties along the river to obtain contact information for individuals who might have an interest in the meeting. Some took a broader approach, indentifying and contacting numerous target organizations and stakeholders. Members of the Missouri River Recovery Implementation Committee (MRRIC) and the MRERP CAT were also contacted to provide input on meeting potential invitees, participants, and balance among stakeholders. In each case, the organizers focused on maximizing balance among an array of stakeholder interest categories, such as navigation, fish and wildlife, recreation, agriculture, ranching, tourism, business, cultural and historic preservation, local government, water supply, power, environmental, land owners, and Native American Tribes. Personal visits, mail, e-mail and telephone were used to extend invitations and recruit participants. In addition, a legal advertisement was placed at least two weeks prior to each meeting in a

local/regional newspaper. In all, 145 members of the public participated in the civic engagement meetings. Approximately 40 people attended the meetings as observers.

e. **Meeting Reports**
Meeting organizers documented the results from each meeting. The reports, which may be found in Attachments E-K, include a summarization of the meeting, more detailed notes on the discussions at the meeting, and other supporting information. The meeting summaries are formatted to include sections on the meeting methodology, values (socio-cultural, livelihood and wealth, health and security, and life-supporting and biocentric), MRERP purpose and need, and the participant's vision for the river. Those results from all of the meetings are summarized into this report. Meeting evaluations were also distributed to participants and observers. A summary of those evaluations are included in the conclusion of this report.

## III. VALUES

The Values section of the report summarizes a range of themes relating to the social, economic and cultural values, views, attitudes, and beliefs of the stakeholders who attended the eight CE meetings. The themes discussed here may be common across all of the meetings, common within a region, or specific to those stakeholders in a particular state. While this report provides a summarization of conversations, more detailed information may be found in the state reports in the Appendices.

a. **Socio-Cultural Values**

Socio-Cultural values refer to those views regarding the aesthetic, educational, leisure/recreational, and community aspects of the Missouri River. Across all of the CE meetings, participants expressed a profound connection to the Missouri River. Many expressed this connection in terms of an aesthetic or spiritual connection. Some noted that they enjoy watching the river; some said that the river provides a connection to the environment, and others felt that the river provides a sense of peace. A few participants noted a need to take time on a regular basis just to get a "river fix". Some Tribal participants explained that the river is sacred, and that a deep spiritual bond exists with the river.

In addition, many felt that the Missouri River provides a sense of identity for communities, states, and the nation. By identifying as a river town, many communities seek to attract residents and businesses, to provide leisure opportunities, and to improve the quality of life for its residents. The river also provides a cultural link for participants across the basin. Native American Tribes find a cultural connection to the river, as well as riparian lands, plants, and animals. Others claimed to have a historical link to Lewis and Clark, and some expressed a cultural bond to the trapper and trader roots of certain river communities. Some participants hope to maintain their community's strong connection to the river. Yet others, in urban settings and in some small towns, felt that

their bond with the Missouri River has weakened, and hope to restore the connection to the river through the MRERP and other activities.

Many participants expressed a connection to recreation on the river. Numerous participants from each state enjoy a range of activities on the river, to include: boating, canoeing, fishing, camping, hiking, hunting, waterskiing, picnics, concerts and festivals. In some communities, particularly in the upper basin, recreation is an important part of the local economy. And, many participants felt that recreation provides opportunities for family and community bonding and strengthening. However, participants from all of the meetings noted that recreation is often impeded by lack of public access and limited amenities on the river. For example, in Omaha, some people feel compelled to illegally cross private lands to access the river because safe and easy public access is not available. Participants in Missouri noted that there is only one facility in the state to purchase fuel on the river.

Participants viewed the education of youth, and the public at large, as an important element of river restoration. Most felt that it is important to educate the public about the ecological aspects of the river, and the history and cultural heritage embodied in the river.

Several Tribal representatives attended the CE meetings, and discussed their cultural connections to the river and the losses that they have incurred. Tribal participants in North and South Dakota discussed the loss of lands adjacent to the river, which has created a distancing between the people and the river, and led to the simultaneous loss of irreplaceable social and cultural places and artifacts. Tribes in Montana have lost several locations historically used for vision quests, sun dances, and ceremonies.

**b. Livelihood and Wealth Values**

Many participants felt that the Missouri River is an important economic driver for economic vitality of local communities and for the region as a whole. Basin communities are impacted by several industries that interact with the river, including recreation, agriculture, livestock, tourism, navigation, development, and power generation. In addition, businesses often use the river amenities as a tool to recruit talent and communities use it to attract new residents. Although the river does support several industries, several participants commented that the river is not being used to its full economic potential. In addition, water supply is perceived as vital to almost all economic activities on the river.

Navigation is generally perceived as a lower basin activity, however some noted that the benefits of navigation are widely realized across the region. Participants noted that barge traffic has a lower carbon footprint than other modes of transportation, it helps

reduce traffic on highways, and it reduces costs for local goods. The recent droughts, and fluctuations in flows, were seen as limiting factors for navigation.

Most agreed that farming is a major economic driver throughout the basin. However, there were contradicting feelings about the benefits and impacts of bottomland farming. There was a common concern over flooding in the basin. Floods threaten devastating effects on communities and farms. Several people noted that flood control should be a top priority. However, some contended that the flooding is a mixed blessing, as it also provides fertile soil to river banks.

While recreation and tourism play a role in the economies of all seven states, it had particular importance in the upper basin. Maintenance and improvement of the natural systems, such as migratory bird flyways and habitat for fish and wildlife populations, was seen as vital to those industries.

Some participants felt that opportunities for Native American Tribes to benefit economically from the river were limited. When the Tribes were removed from the river, much of their access to the river was eliminated. The river not only provided an economic resource, but also a food source for some Tribal people.

Although most participants agreed upon the important economic role the river played in the region, some expressed a need for balance between the economic outputs and the non-financial benefits found in the river. Quality of life values, which can be impacted by economic and non-economic factors, need to be considered. And, the public nature of the water resources must be preserved.

**c. Health, Safety and Security Values**

Most meeting participants believed that the Missouri River plays a central role in the health and the well-being of the people in river communities. For example, the river provides an important source of energy, either directly through the development of hydroelectric power, or indirectly as a cooling agent for nuclear plants. Abundant and affordable energy is important to attract businesses, and contributes positively to the quality of life of local residents.

The river is also the primary source of drinking water for basin communities. Abundant and clean drinking water contributes to the positive health of residents. Some participants expressed concern that the quality of the water in the river is not suitable for humans or wildlife, and that pollution may affect the sustainable health of river ecosystems. Concerns ranged from industrial and wastewater discharges, and super fund sites, around Omaha, to pesticide and herbicide run-off in Missouri. Others discussed the trash and debris, from tires to refrigerators, commonly found in the river.

Some went as far as to describe the river as "filthy," and expressed concern about excess silt concentrations.

As noted above, flooding is a historical concern of riparian residents that threatens communities, farms, and riparian lands. In Missouri, memories of the damage endured as a result of the 1993 floods were prominent. Some participants in Iowa described the loss of historic landmarks and other cultural artifacts in floods. It was noted that the management of river flows directly impacts flood potential.

As was discussed previously, recreation is an important activity on the river. In several meetings, participants mentioned that the danger associated with the river often detracts from recreation. For example, some participants were concerned about the velocity of flows and industrial development in urban areas both discussed. There was some debate as to whether these dangers was real or perceived.

Tribal participants generally agreed that the security and well-being of Tribal people is negatively impacted by lack of access to clean drinking water, and barriers to benefit from economic opportunities associated with the river. In one instance, a Nebraska Tribe was separated from the Missouri River and pressured to purchase land at inflated rates to secure a water supply.

In the upper basin, several participants were concerned about sedimentation in the river and dams. Sediment is seen as a problem because it fills space in dams that would otherwise be used for water storage, and hampers and blocks river intake and outtake systems. Erosion was also a major concern, as the combination of erosion and sedimentation modifies river flows and leads to the destruction and elimination of farm acreage along the river. While many observed the negative effects of sedimentation and erosion, some concluded that the movement of sediment and erosion of banks also creates river islands and sandbars, which provide wildlife habitat and recreational benefits.

Some participants were concerned about the potential effects of climate change, which could affect water supply, flooding, and other river processes. And others expressed concerns about the possible effects of a conflict over the unique interests of upper and lower basin states. Even though there were many comments suggesting frustration about sharing of water resources with other riparian states, there was a common sentiment that the residents in the basin need to work collaboratively to understand each other's needs, and share the water to the benefit of all.

**d. Life sustaining/biocentric values**

Meeting participants acknowledged that the river has changed over time, and many expressed a moral and ethical responsibility for the preservation of the river and both

the protection of existing habitat and restoration of degraded areas. Participants expressed desire for a diverse and dynamic river, providing critical habitat and supporting many species.

Many valued thriving fish and wildlife populations, with an emphasis often, but not always, placed on native species. Others focused on the flora along the river banks, identifying the habitat improvements brought by cottonwoods and lamenting the loss of riparian and native prairie plants traditionally used as food and medicinal sources by Native American Tribes. Wetland restoration was also identified as an area of concern, particularly in Iowa, where waterfowl migratory stopovers changed as wetlands were lost.

Participants discussed that the intertwined values of leisure, aesthetics and sustained economies and communities all started with the river system, and that a healthy river was life sustaining not just for wildlife but for people, economies and communities. Participant's opinions differed over whether management should emphasize economics, even at the expense of ecological values, or whether ecological health should have a greater priority, but all identified the need for balance and hoped that a plan that met both ecological and economic/community needs was achievable, in order to sustain the river for future generations.

## IV. MRERP PURPOSE AND NEED

The Draft MRERP Purpose and Need statements were shared at the CE meetings. The Draft Purpose and Need Statement can be found in the CE Presentation in Attachment C. To generate discussion on the Purpose and Need statements, the meeting participants were asked two questions: (1) What are the problems which affect the Missouri River ecosystems and the barriers that affect restoration? and (2) What are the opportunities that may be realized with the MRERP? Participants were also asked, (3) What natural resources should be addressed or considered? This is a summary of feedback regarding the Draft Purpose and Need Statements from the CE meetings.

### a. Problems and Barriers

Information on the problems that affect Missouri River ecosystems and the barriers that effect its restoration will provide further insight into the Need Statement for the MRERP. Participants relayed a number of problems affecting the Missouri River, including water quantity and quality, land use impacts in flood prone areas, loss of wetlands and floodplain prairies, and a lack of public access to river amenities, among others.

In addition, there was a common concern that there is a lack of credible science related to the Missouri River. Studies are perceived to lack scientific credibility when the work is not peer reviewed, lacks agreement from all basin stakeholders, or is not collaboratively developed by agencies and interest groups. Some noted that some important subjects are lacking sufficient data.

There was a general dissatisfaction over the historical actions of federal agencies in the basin, and a concern that those actions would continue. Participants felt that a lack of collaboration among agencies, Tribes, and stakeholders contributed to the problems in the basin, and thought that public involvement could be improved. A lack of public education and understanding about the river was a common concern. In addition, some felt that government bureaucracy, federal laws, lack of funding, and political processes have and will continue to interfere with river management and restoration.

Some in Missouri and Kansas thought that the impacts of artificial rises were an issue. Participants in North and South Dakota were concerned with sedimentation and erosion. Many participants, from all states, felt that the loss of vegetation, increase in invasive species, decline in native species, drought, and excessive river modifications are problems that affect the river system. While many were concerned with flooding, others felt that a lack of flooding is an equal concern.

Several people noted that it will be difficult to define restoration, including the scope and reach of restoration activities, and where and how to begin those activities. Conflicting priorities among stakeholders, particularly with respect to upper and lower basin needs, was a common concern.

**b. Opportunities**

Feedback on potential opportunities associated with the MRERP will inform the project's Purpose Statement. Several common themes surfaced during the discussion about opportunities, including protecting community water supplies, increasing public education and knowledge, developing broader public access and amenities on the river, and improving water quality.

People were encouraged with the opportunities to protect and improve the natural resources in the Missouri Basin. Some felt that the river could be positively affected with appropriate land use changes, including a riparian buffer and conservation areas. The desire for an improvement of river ecosystems, and an increase in native animal and plant life surfaced in all of the meetings. Several participants hoped for increased scenic and recreational areas. And, participants from across the basin suggested that riparian communities could be better connected through docks, marinas, and other projects to improve river access and amenities.

Participants were enthusiastic about the opportunity to work collaboratively with diverse groups, including federal agencies, states, and other stakeholders. Several people noted that the MRERP provides a good platform to heal relationships with the federal government and change management practices regarding river operations and resources. Most expressed an interest in remaining involved with the effort.

Some participants suggested that the MRERP provides an opportunity to ensure that certain economic activities remain productive. For example, participants in Montana

suggested that protecting the river's ecosystem will help maintain and improve recreational activities. Others noted that a healthy ecosystem would assist tourism in the basin. Several participants, in numerous states, felt that actions taken with the MRERP could help protect continued agriculture activities. While some thought that federally authorized uses need to be reassessed, others felt that that those uses should be maintained and enhanced.

Participants commonly expressed their support for a comprehensive, long-term, basin-wide restoration plan, although some questioned the scope and breadth of the restoration. Most felt that the MRERP provides a good opportunity to resolve those questions collaboratively. A few people noted that the MRERP also provides a platform to discuss the appropriate balance between local, regional and national interests in the river.

c. **Focal Natural resources**
The meeting participants were also asked about potential focal natural resources. Focal natural resources are those fish and wildlife species, plant communities, habitat, and other natural resources that will become targets to measure the success of restoration activities. A list of the focal natural resources suggested at the CE meetings may be found in Attachment L.

## V. FUTURE VISIONING

To develop a future vision, participants were asked, two questions: 1) What is your vision for a restored Missouri River? And 2) What conditions and features would be present? Future visions for the Missouri River had many common themes across the basin. All interests met on the point of balance; each meeting produced a vision of restoration that served both environmental and socio-economic needs. Participants described a river system that was sustainable (both economically and environmentally), ecologically stable, healthy in habitat, hydrology and wildlife, genuinely multi-use, maximized economic opportunity and met the needs of future generations.

Participants vision for restoration described a river with natural features, free flowing (in places) and with healthy riparian areas. Some described a river with access to its flood plain, while others addressed protection of scenic areas, suggesting that some areas of the river become protected with park status. In the upper basin, South Dakota visions addressed sediment concerns, describing a future river system where erosion and sedimentation had been controlled using vegetation and proven tools. Participants across the basin discussed a river with restored fish populations, healthy wildlife and the presence of cottonwoods.

Participants often described clean water in their visions of the future river. They envisioned a river that provided drinking water for communities and furthermore, where people swim and eat fish without fear of toxins. The future river is a source of energy and supports community's utilities, and is family friendly and safe, with increased recreational opportunities.

Participants discussed a future where the economic value of the river was maximized. Visions for a multi-purpose river, where navigation continued and was in balance with other uses were expressed in Iowa, Kansas and Missouri. Some suggested ideas such as secondary channels for barges, or a retooling of the navigation industry with barges designed to be smaller with a shallower draft. Some visions of the economic use of the river included sustained agricultural communities, with farmers able to provide food for the nation. Other meeting participants discussed a future that maximized economic opportunities through tourism and recreation.

Many envisioned restoration of not just habitat, but of relationships. Participants described increased access, connection and education surrounding the river, while envisioning increased interpretive areas on the river and increased educational opportunities. They described a restoration of traditional values and of relationships with Native American Tribes through the planning process. In South Dakota, this meant river access to the 5 Tribes along the river in the state, and a reintroduction of watershed districts and tribal management councils, with resources belonging to and managed by the people. In Montana it meant collaborative process between USACE, other state and federal agencies, and sovereign nations. Overall, participants expressed a desire for both a sustainable river and a comprehensive, long-term, sustainable plan; one that learns from history, looks towards future generations, and practices long term collaboration with agencies and with the public.

## VI. CONCLUSION

The MRERP Civic Engagement Program was implemented to provide public stakeholders an opportunity to learn more about the MRERP, to have a meaningful dialogue about the restoration of the Missouri River, and to provide input into the Public Scoping phase of the project. The CE meetings were unique with respect to traditional public involvement meetings, as a focused group of participants representing a balanced set of interests participated in six-hour facilitated sessions. More than 180 participants and observers attended eight meetings held throughout the Missouri River Basin. In those eight meetings, valuable information was collected regarding social, cultural, and economic values, the MRERP Purpose and Need Statement, natural resource issues, and a future vision for the river.

The U.S. Institute conducted meeting evaluations following six of the eight meetings. In those evaluations, meeting participants and observers expressed their satisfaction with the organization of the meetings and facilitator performance. They expressed gratitude for the opportunities to learn more about the project, to interact with other stakeholders, and to have their thoughts incorporated into MRERP. Several participants felt much of the value of the meetings was learning about other stakeholder's issues and concerns, and putting a "human face" to the issues. Some were surprised about the degree of common interest among different stakeholder groups. Many people were complimentary of the USACE and FWS, and commended them making an effort to understand the broad spectrum of stakeholder needs and interests. Others noted that the CE meetings were the "essence of democracy", "inspiring and spirited", and "a great exchange of information".

Participants and observers also offered their concerns with the sessions, and provided suggestions to improve the CE meetings. One participant noted that the purpose of the meeting, and some of the questions, were vague. Although most felt that each meeting provided a diverse range of interests and perspectives, there were concerns that some of the meetings had a low turnout and participants encouraged additional participation. Others were concerned about the quality of the dialogue, and noted that much of it was not based on realistic scenarios, and that discussions were not always factually correct. Some thought the CE program could be improved with longer sessions, and field trips to visit different areas of the river.

Some noted that the meetings presented a challenging problem, and that additional meetings are required. Most participants were enthusiastic about the opportunity, and wanted to remain informed and involved.

## ATTACHMENTS

A- Meeting Schedule

B- Common Agenda

C- Public Scoping Presentation

D- Civic Engagement Meeting Questions

E- Montana Report

F- Nebraska Report

G- Iowa Report

H- South Dakota Report

I- North Dakota Report

J- Missouri Report

K- Kansas Report

L- Focal Natural Resources

**MRERP Civic Engagement Meetings Fall 2009**

**Final Report**

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# Attachment A

## Meeting Schedule

**Civic Engagement Meeting Schedule**

| Date | State | City | Organizer |
|---|---|---|---|
| 18-Aug | Montana | Poplar and Great Falls (2 meetings held simultaneously) | PlaceMatters and University of Montana Center for Natural Resources and Environmental Policy |
| 17-Sep | Nebraska | Omaha | Creighton University Werner Institute/University of Nebraska Public Policy Center |
| 18-Sep | Iowa | Sioux City | Creighton University Werner Institute/University of Nebraska Public Policy Center |
| 28-Sep | South Dakota | Chamberlain/Oacoa | South Dakota Public Policy Institute |
| 30-Sep | North Dakota | Bismarck | The Consensus Council |
| 2-Oct | Missouri | Jefferson City | Consensus |
| 3-Oct | Kansas | Atchison | The Institute for Civic Discourse and Democracy (ICDD) Kansas State University |

**MRERP Civic Engagement Meetings Fall 2009**

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# Attachment B

## Common Agenda

# MRERP Civic Engagement Meetings

# Draft Agenda

**Objectives:**

1) To educate the participants on the MRERP
2) To gather in-depth public input on key elements of the Missouri River Ecosystem Restoration Plan (MRERP) Scoping Process
3) To foster dialogue and discussion among different communities of interest and place
4) To improve the connection among the stakeholders, communities, and the Missouri River

**Agenda:**

**10:30-11 am Welcome, Introductions, Proposed Ground Rules and Agenda**

- Short introductions – Name, organization and/or community

**11-12:30 Values Exercise**

**Social Context and Identity**

1. (Knowing your (oral) history), what are the value and benefits of the MO River and its ecosystem?
2. What are your needs related to the MO River and are your needs being met?
    - What is the most important benefit you get from the river? How and why?
    - What is your connection to the MO River?
    - What are the specific practices and traditions that are central to these values?

**Community**

3. What does the MO River mean to your community, state, and nation? How and why?
    - How does the MO River affect your community's quality of life?
    - How has the MO River shaped the culture of the community? How might the MO River shape the culture of the community into the future?

**Economic Vitality**

4. What does the MO River mean to your own and your community's/states' economic vitality, diversity, and sustainability?
    - How would your community be economically impacted without the use of the MO River?

**12:30 – 1:30 Working Lunch – Presentation and Q&A**

- Overview and purpose of MRERP process
- Roles and Expectations
- Missouri River Basin Management Lessons Learned

**1:30 – 3:00 Future Scenarios/Visioning**

1. What is your vision for a restored MO River? What conditions and features would be present?

    - If your vision becomes reality, how is the MO River different from today? How do people connect to it?
    - How would you measure successful restoration of the MO River ecosystem? What would full implementation of the plan look like?

**3:00 – 4:00 Moving Forward: Purpose and Need/Targets/Restoration Actions Discussion**

1. What do you think are the issues/problems that affect the MO River ecosystems? What are the opportunities that exist that relate to those problems?
    - What should be changed or fixed?
    - What should the plan do?
    - What are the barriers?
2. What natural resources should be addressed or considered? What issue is of concern related to these resources?
3. What does restoration mean to you?
    - What does a restored MO River mean to you? (this may be the main question)
    - What are the trade-offs with respect to restoration?

**4:00 – 4:15 Input from Observers**

**4:15 – 4:20 Reflection Period**

- Reflection from participants on meeting

- What went well/What could be improved

**4:15 – 4:30 Next Steps and Closing –**

- Discuss how the input from the meetings will be used in the study

**MRERP Civic Engagement Meetings Fall 2009**

**Final Report**

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# Attachment C

## Public Scoping Presentation

MISSOURI RIVER

ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION PLAN

# WELCOME

## TO PUBLIC SCOPING

*for the*

## MISSOURI RIVER ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION PLAN AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

One River. One Vision.

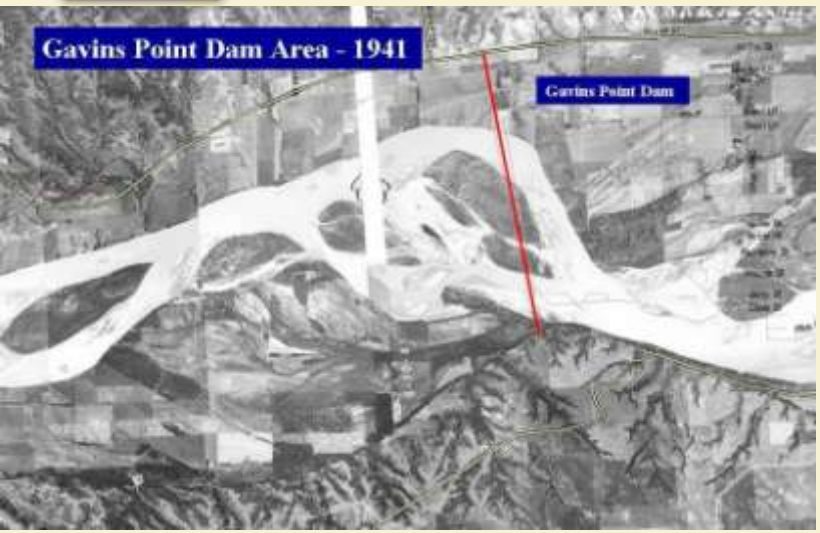
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS - KANSAS CITY & OMAHA DISTRICTS & THE US FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE

# Presentation Objectives

- Provide project background
- Project roadmap and schedule
- Study planning process

# Missouri River Basin Facts

- Longest River and Second Largest River Basin in the United States
- 530,000 Square Miles, Including Ten States, Two Canadian Provinces, and 29 American Indian Tribes

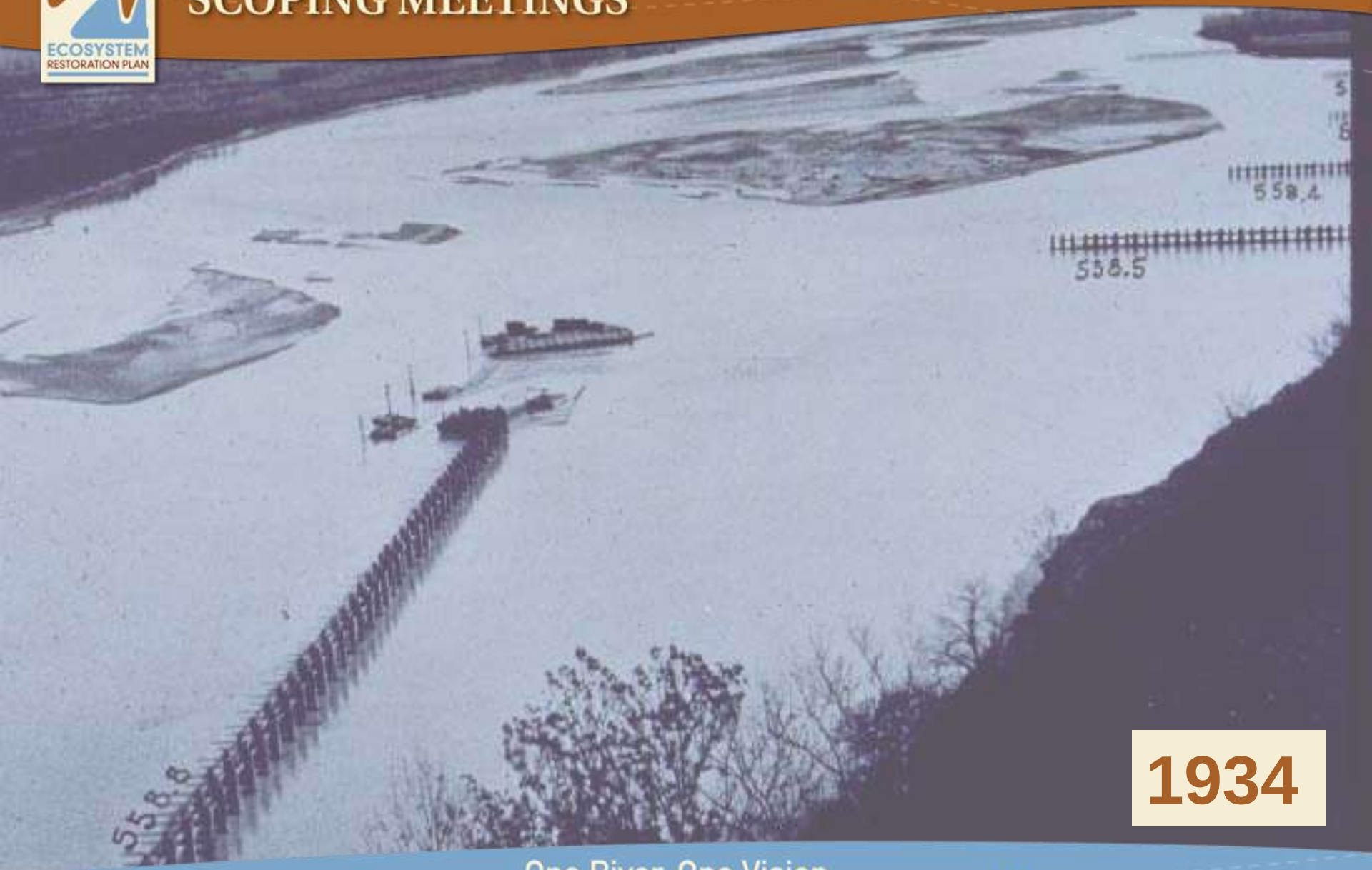


# Missouri River Facts

- One of the Most Regulated Rivers in the United States
- Largest Series of Impoundments and More Than 700 Miles of Largely Regulated, Stable, and Uniform Channel
- River Management Under Multiple Programs and Jurisdictions

MISSOURI RIVER ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION PLAN

# BASIN-WIDE PUBLIC SCOPING MEETINGS




1934

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MISSOURI RIVER ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION PLAN

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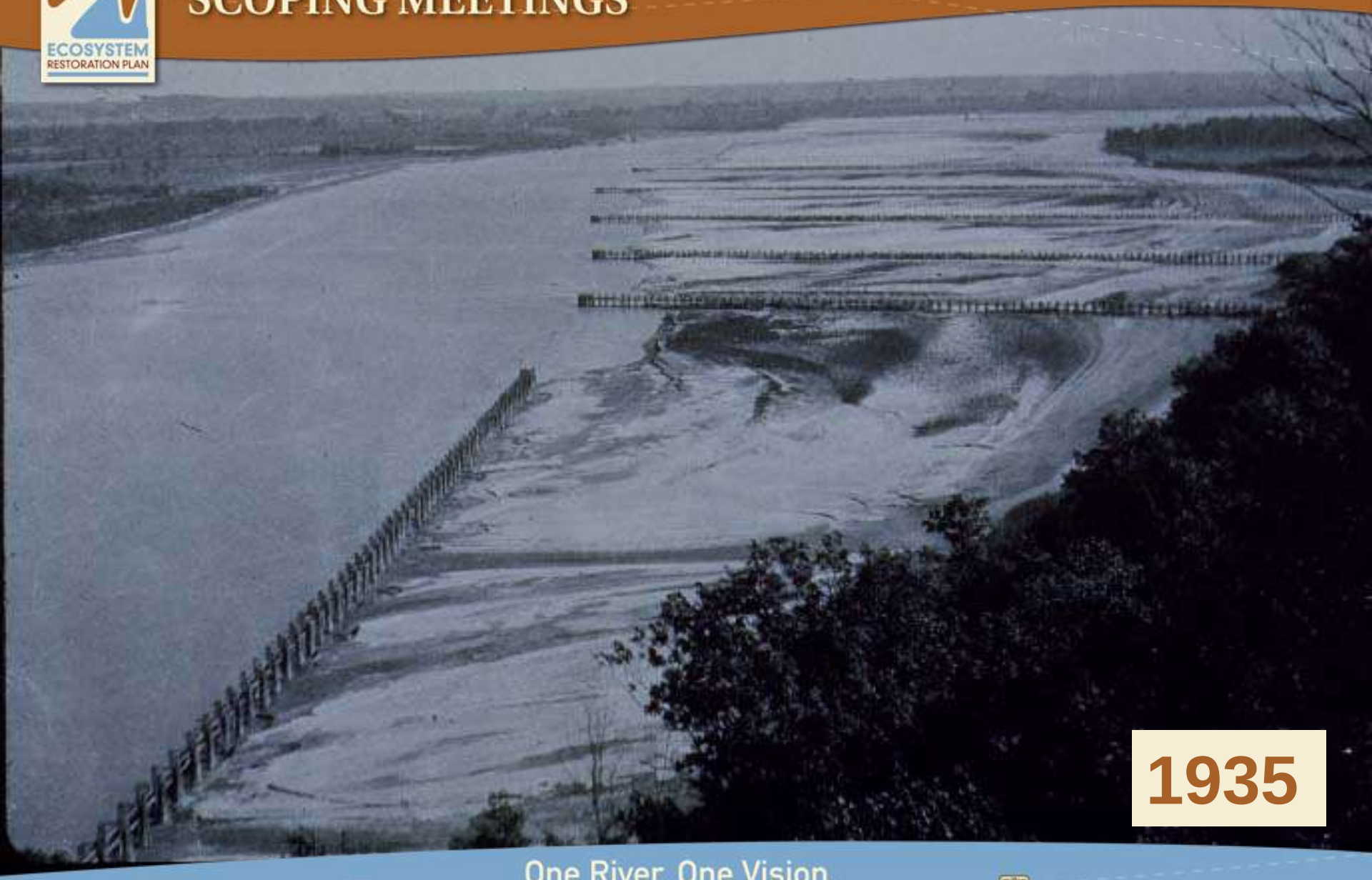


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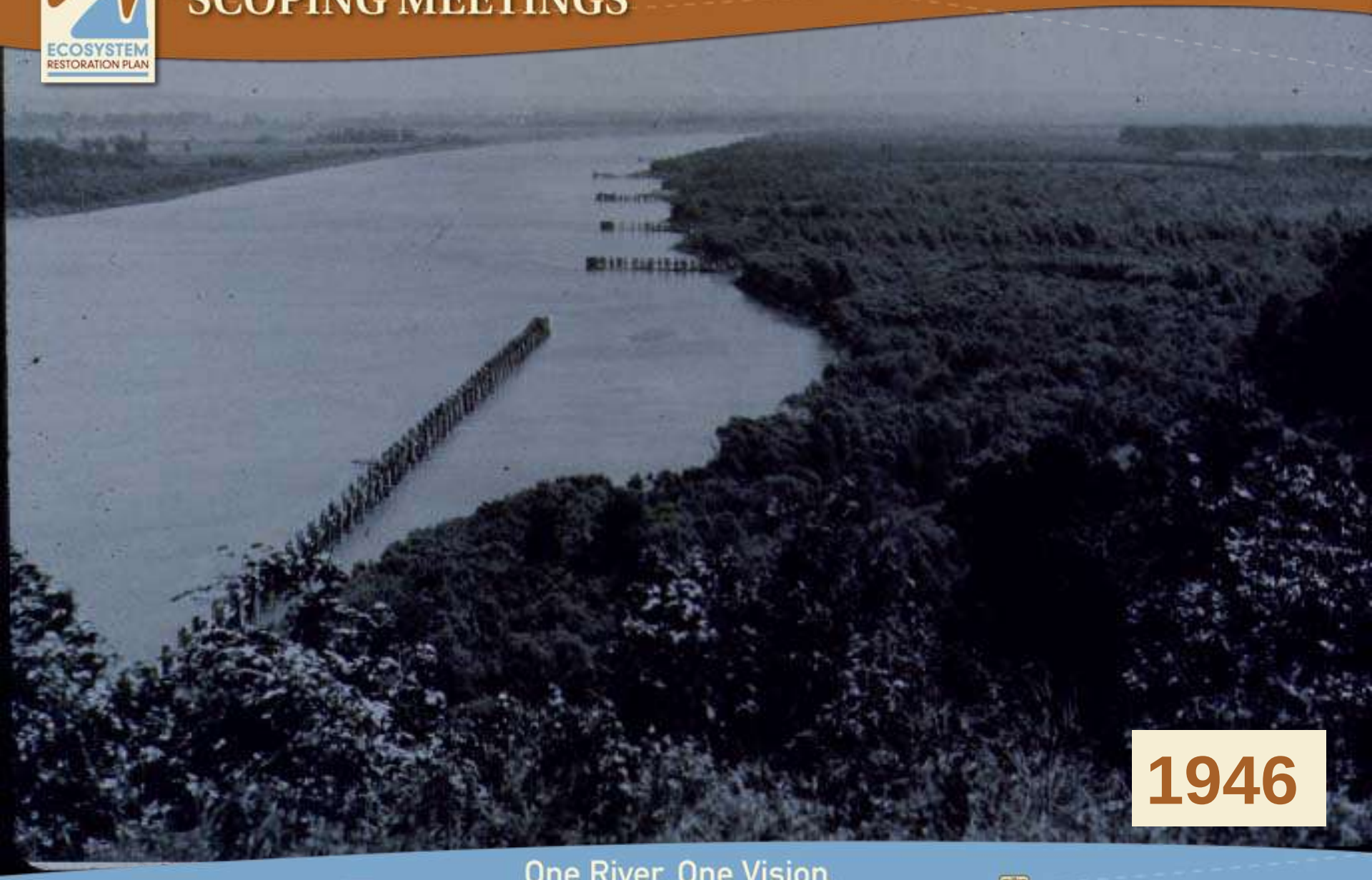


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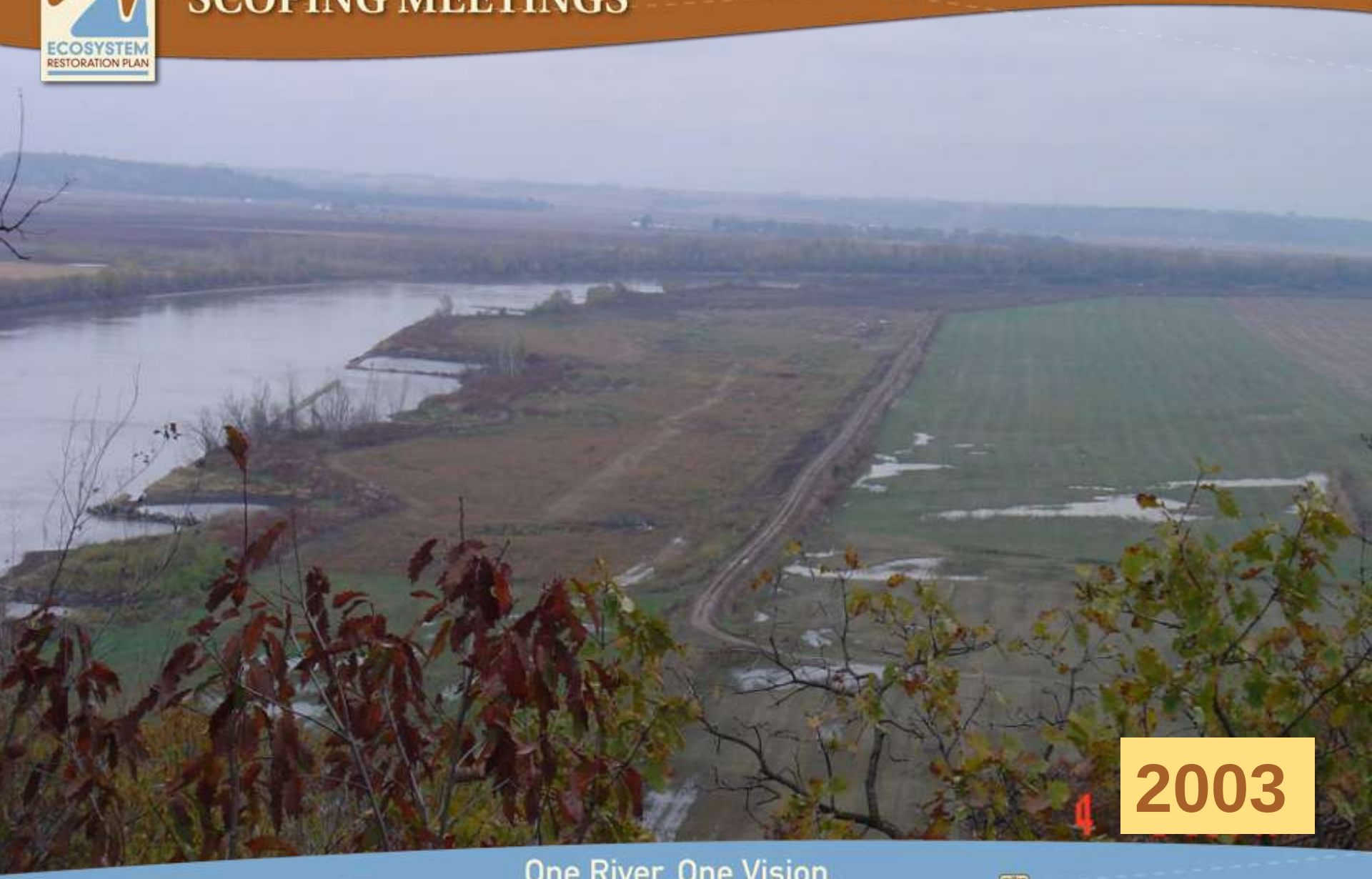

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# Identified Natural Resource Concerns

## 2002 National Research Council findings:

- Nearly 3 million acres of natural habitat altered
- Nonnative fish dominate many river reaches
- 51 of 67 native fish species listed as rare or decreasing
- Native fish food resources reduced by about 70%

# BASIN-WIDE PUBLIC SCOPING MEETINGS

## CURRENT MISSOURI RIVER RECOVERY PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

- Habitat Creation
- Science
- Flow Modification
- Monitoring
- Missouri River Recovery Implementation Committee

## MISSOURI RIVER ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION PLAN
## &
## Potentially Other Studies and Plans

# 2007 Water Resources Development Act

The Secretary of the Army, in consultation with the Missouri River Recovery Implementation Committee, shall conduct a study of the Missouri River and its tributaries to determine actions required –

- To mitigate losses of aquatic and terrestrial habitat
- To recover federally listed species and
- To restore the ecosystem to prevent further declines among other native species.

# The Plan will…

1. Consider ongoing programs and actions related to mitigation, recovery, and restoration
2. Identify priorities for mitigation, recovery, and restoration throughout the Basin
3. Outline a long-term adaptive management approach for restoration of the river
4. Guide future program and site-specific action development to ensure that the overall goals of MRERP are met in the long term

# BASIN-WIDE PUBLIC SCOPING MEETINGS

## Context

SITE-SPECIFIC PLANS

IMPLEMENTATION PLANS

ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION PLANS

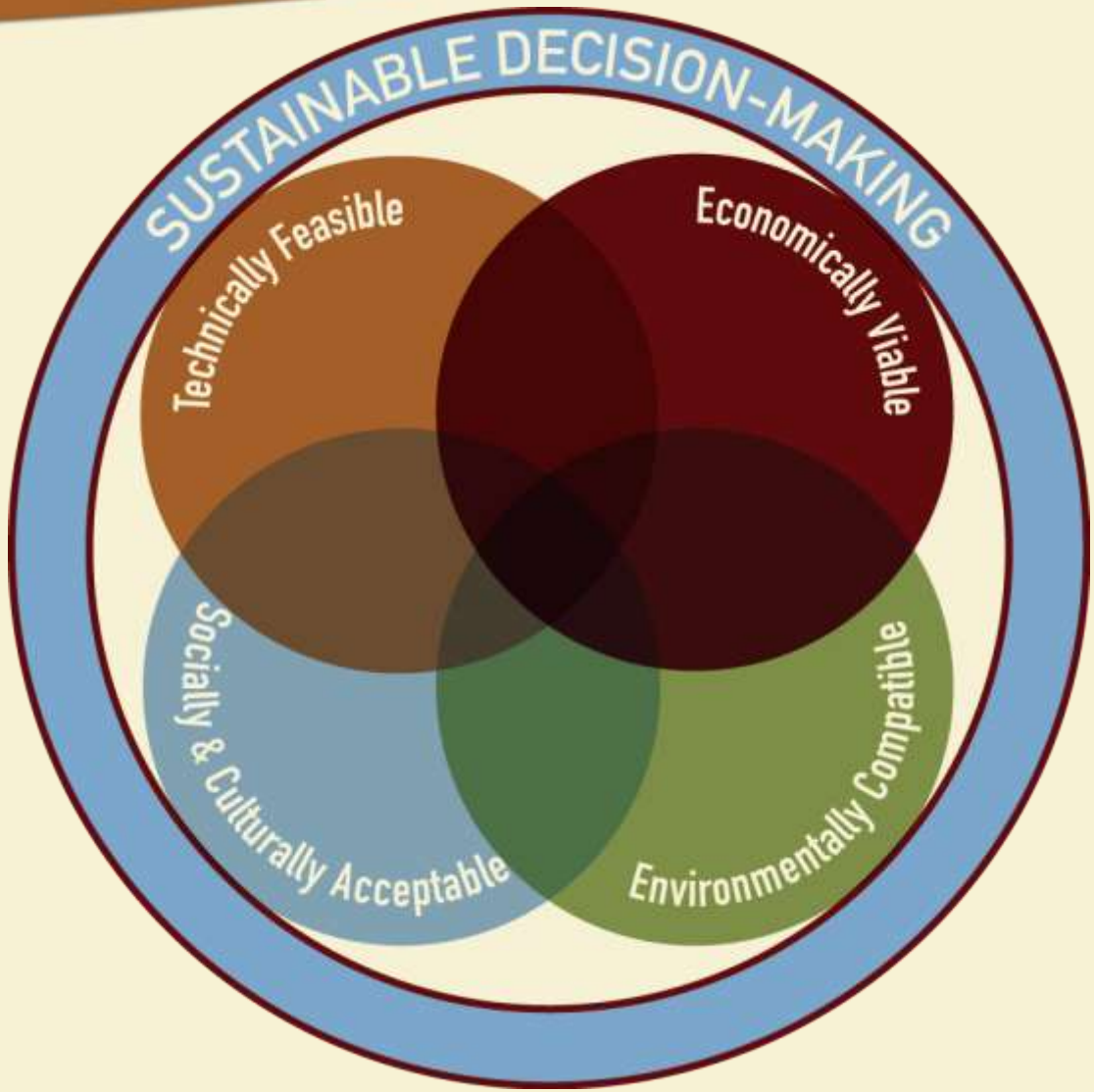
## ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION PLAN

1. Identifies program goals and general management prescriptions.
2. Clearly describes specific resource conditions to be achieved and identify the kinds of management that can be used to achieve those conditions.
3. Ensures that the basic foundation for decision-making has been developed in consultation with interested stakeholders.

# Plan Participants

- US Army Corps of Engineers & US Fish & Wildlife Service
- Cooperating Agencies
- Public
- Tribes
- Missouri River Recovery Implementation Committee (MRRIC)

# GOAL: Sustainable Decisions



# GOAL: Sustainable Decisions

# MRERP Planning Process

# Plan Roadmap

**PHASE 1 — INITIATE** Planning

1) Develop Partnerships & Prepare the Study
2) Establish Study Rationale and Focus

**PHASE 2 — STUDY** the Affected Environment

3) Assess Resource Conditions
4) Evaluate Future Issues and Situation

**PHASE 3 — CONSIDER** Alternatives

5) Formulate Restoration and Adaptive Management Alternatives
6) Compare Impacts of Alternatives
7) Consider Preferred Alternatives

**PHASE 4 — SELECT** the Plan

8) Develop Draft MRERP-EIS
9) Develop Final MRERP-EIS
10) Develop Record of Decision

# Next Steps

## Initiate Planning / Establish Study Rationale and Focus

a. Scope, Purpose and Need

b. Focal Natural Resources

c. Key Social, Economic, and Cultural Values

d. Potential Future Scenario Visioning

# Draft Purpose Statement

## To determine the actions required:

- to mitigate losses of aquatic and terrestrial habitat
- to recover federally listed species under the Endangered Species Act
- to restore the ecosystem to prevent further declines among other native species, while seeking to balance with social, economic, and cultural values for future generations.

# Draft Need Statement

The Plan is needed to fully implement the direction received in Subsection (a) of Section 5018 of the Water Resources Development Act of 2007; and address current trends indicating:

- diminished natural habitat;
- reduced populations of native species and communities;
- and reduced variability of physical processes such as flows, flooding, and sediment erosion/deposition.

# Plan Scope

- Long-term, large scale strategy vs. short-term, site-specific actions
- Mainstem and tributaries (ecological nexus)
- Planning for 30-50 years into the future

# Natural Resources and Human Environment

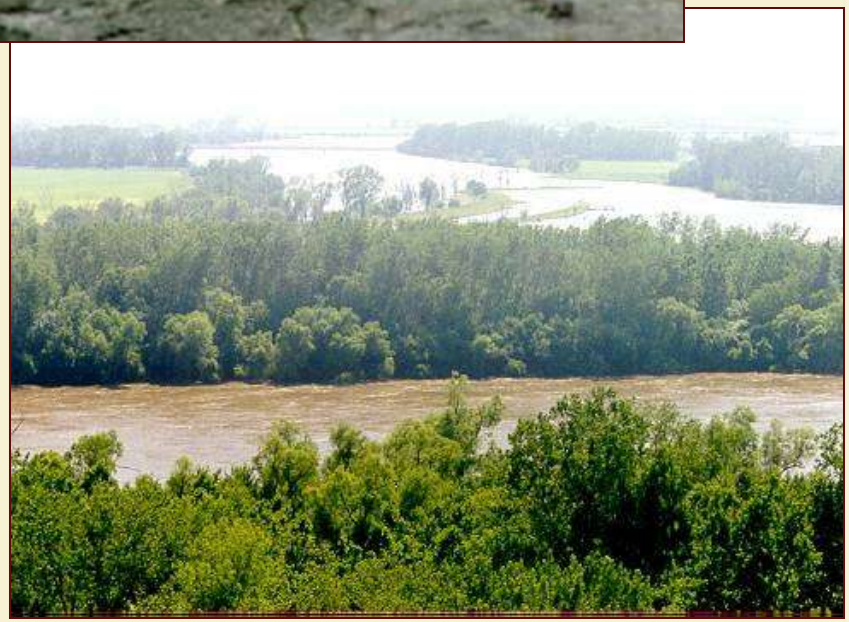
- What are the Important Natural Resources to Consider?
- What Social, Economic, and Cultural Topics Should be Considered?

# Initiate Planning:

## Characterizing a Healthy Missouri River

**Focal Natural Resources:**

species, communities and ecosystems that are the focus of MRERP planning



**Possible Focal Natural Resources:**

- Sicklefin chub
- Cottonwood forest communities
- Floodplain wetlands

# Initiate Planning:

## Characterizing a Healthy Missouri River

### Possible Key Social, Economic, and Cultural Values:

- Navigation
- Water supply
- Flood attenuation
- Power generation
- Recreation
- Water Quality
- Cultural Resources

**Social, economic, and cultural values:**

significant cultural values and economic and social services provided by the river

# Future Vision

## What is Your Vision of the Missouri River in the Future?

# Public Scoping Process

- Official Scoping Period: May 1, 2009 through December 1, 2009
- 10 Open House Meetings Across the Basin
- 8 Civic Engagement Meetings Across the Basin
- Topics: Purpose, Need, and Scope; Natural Resources; Social, Economic, and Cultural Values; Visioning

# Public Scoping Meetings and Civic Engagement

| | Public Meetings | Civic Engagement |
|---|---|---|
| Attendance | Unknown #, Open/revolving, Demographics depend on location | Open/invited/fixed, 20-45 per mtg, Diverse/Targeted |
| Structure | Duration—4 hrs, open house, presentation | Duration—4-6 hrs, facilitated/interactive |
| Impact on Work Products | General comments/ feedback on topics | Refined/detailed comments/feedback on topics |

# Civic Engagement Process

Your discussions will help answer the following questions:

- What is the purpose of the plan?
- Why is a plan like this needed?
- Are we assessing the right area(s)?
- What are the important natural resources to consider?
- What are the important social, economic, and cultural issues to consider?
- What should the future vision be for the river?

# MRERP Points of Contact

- USACE
  - Randy Sellers, randy.p.sellers@usace.army.mil, phone 402.995.2689
  - Jennifer Switzer, jennifer.l.switzer@usace.army.mil, phone 816.389.3062
- USFWS
  - Wayne Nelson-Stastny, wayne_nelsonstastny@fws.gov, phone 402.667.2884

MISSOURI RIVER

ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION PLAN

# THANK YOU

## FOR ATTENDING THIS PUBLIC SCOPING EVENT

*for the*

MISSOURI RIVER ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION PLAN AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

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**MRERP Civic Engagement Meetings Fall 2009**

**Final Report**

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# Attachment D

## Civic Engagement Meeting Questions

Civic Engagement Meeting Questions

*Social, Cultural, and Economic Values*

5. What are the value and benefits of the MO River and its ecosystem?
6. What are your needs related to the MO River and are your needs being met?
7. What does the MO River mean to your community, state, and nation? How and why?
8. What does the MO River mean to your own and your community's/state's economic vitality, diversity, and sustainability?

*Purpose, Need, and Natural Resource Issues*

1. What do you think are the problems that exist which affect the MO River ecosystems? What should be changed or fixed? What should the plan do?
2. What do you think are opportunities that exist which affect the MO River ecosystems?
3. What are the barriers to realizing these opportunities?
4. What natural resources should be addressed or considered? What issue is of concern related to these resources?
5. What does restoration mean to you? What does a restored MO River mean to you?

*Future Visioning/Scenarios*

1. What is your vision for a restored MO River? What conditions and features would be present?

**MRERP Civic Engagement Meetings Fall 2009**

**Final Report**

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# Attachment E

## Montana Report

# Missouri River Basin

Civic Engagement Meetings
Great Falls and Poplar, MT

# Final Report

June 2, 2010

PlaceMatters

The University of Montana
Center for Natural Resources and Environmental Policy

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**Missouri River Basin Civic Engagement: Montana**
**Final Report**
**University of Montana Center for Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and PlaceMatters**
**November 6, 2009**

## Introduction

The facilitation team organized two civic engagement meetings in Montana on August 18, 2009, one in Poplar and one in Great Falls. Attendees at the two meetings included ranchers, a county commissioner, tribal members, a conservation district board member, conservation organization members, agency personnel, and people associated with the community college. The Poplar meeting involved nine participants and seven observers while Great Falls had seven participants and one observer. The lists of participants and observers are included in Appendix A.

Participants in both meetings felt they represented unique portions of the river. Private property abuts many of the river reaches in this area, especially in eastern Montana, and the central Montana portion of the river includes both significant private land and the large areas of federal land. Participants take pride in being private stewards of the river and in having important connections with the river. Most or all of the participants in both meetings regularly recreate or interact with the Missouri River, and all had specific concerns about how the river is managed.

## Methodology: Outreach

A list of potential participants was compiled from a variety of sources. One conference call was held with Mike Ruggles, MT Fish Wildlife and Parks; Mary Sexton, DNRC; Deb Madison and Jeanne Spaur, Fort Peck Office of Environmental Protection; Brian Manwaring, U.S. Institute of Environmental Conflict Resolution (USIECR); Daisy Patterson, Center for Natural Resources and Environmental Policy (CNREP); and Matt McKinney, CNREP on July 7th. A follow up call occurred on July 14th with Ken Snyder, PlaceMatters; Matt McKinney, CNREP; Daisy Patterson, CNREP, and Mike Ruggles' replacements on MRERP, Travis Horton, Steve Dalbey, and Pat Gunderson from Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks. Horton, Dalbey, and Gunderson all contributed names for potential participants.

The facilitation team built on the list of potential invitees through multiple conversations with key community members in each meeting location (e.g., Peggy Beltrone, Cascade County Commissioner; and Tribal CAT members representing interests in the Fort Peck, Wolf Point, and Poplar areas. Vicki Marquis from the Missouri River Recovery Implementation Committee was contacted to provide insight on additional potential meeting invitees. Vicki Marquis forwarded the meeting invitation to several people, however she was initially contacted after the initial invitations were delivered, which occurred approximately one week prior to

the meeting. Some of the organizers and participants felt the short notice created a barrier to appropriate and adequate meeting participation.

The facilitation team also reached out to various businesses and organizations that seemed likely to have some interest in Missouri River planning efforts. Those businesses ranged from hotel operators to museums and science centers to outfitters and Lewis and Clark tour guides.

Potential participants were notified through whatever means of contact information were provided. If a phone number was available, potential participants received two phone calls. If a mailing address was available, potential participants were mailed a packet containing the Corps-provided press release, the MRERP fact sheet, and a letter from the facilitation team inviting the recipient to RSVP as either an observer or a participant. These documents are included in Appendix C.

## Methodology: Meetings

The Poplar meeting used tables shaped in a "U" formation facing the screens and facilitators at the front of the room. The Great Falls meeting alternated between a similar "U" formation and breakout groups at individual tables. Both sites initially had good internet connections, and the facilitation team set up a video conferencing link allowing each site to see and hear the activities occurring at the other site. This had the advantage of conveying the sense that others were engaged in the same process and tackling the same questions at the very same time. The internet connection in Poplar degraded as the meeting went on, making the video link unusable, but it helped make the other simultaneous meeting less abstract even in the short time that it operated.

After a short introduction, participants placed points on a map and shared stories, concerns, and memories that corresponded to those specific points. Each point represented socio-cultural, economic, and ecological values, and each was color coded accordingly. The participants could then visually see the distribution of important points and values associated with each.

The facilitation team had planned to use a web-based Google Map to plot locations and record comments, accessing and editing the map in real-time simultaneously from both locations. Doing so has the advantage of allowing participants to see the combined map as they are creating it and eliminates the need for subsequent digitization of the data. Unfortunately, the instability of the internet connection in Poplar prevented the teams from consolidating the map in real time. The facilitation team instead relied on a backup plan that was essentially identical (e.g., color coded points) but using paper maps and completing the digital Google Map after the meetings. This highlighted the value of having backup plans, especially when relying on internet connections in rural communities. The subsequent conversations included a recap and more in-depth discussion of many of the values, concerns, and ideas associated with the dots participants placed on the maps.

After the initial mapping and discussion, Brian Manwaring (USIECR) delivered the dinner presentation in Poplar while Brad Thompson (USACE) did so in Great Falls. Following the dinner presentation, through a facilitated group discussion, participants discussed their vision for the future and identified specific criteria for successful river management. In the Great Falls meeting, the one deviation from the agenda was a discussion about concerns over this civic engagement meeting participation and structure. The group presented ideas on how to more effectively engage people in rural Montana, which included more thorough and consistent outreach and education about the project and the importance of public engagement, and to engage other groups such as the Montana Association of Conservation Districts to help provide input on impacted stakeholders.

In both meetings, participants then discussed specific problems, challenges and opportunities regarding the plan. They also discussed their vision for the Missouri River Basin. Using AnyWare Crowdstorming (a computer/web-based brainstorming tool developed by PlaceMatters), each group created a brainstormed list of "indicators of success" (i.e., answers to the questions, "What does your vision look like?" and "How exactly will we know if we've achieved your vision?"). Using the keypad polling devices, the group prioritized these indicators. If the Poplar site had a stable internet connection, the two groups would have engaged in both the brainstorming and prioritizing together using the web-based applications: the groups would have been able to watch each using the video links, they would have brainstormed together using a single web site to gather all the ideas and then distribute them into categories ("buckets"), and they would have all then prioritized together using the keypad polling. The facilitation team would have been able to show polling results for each of the two sites as well as aggregated across both sites. As with the Google Map tool, the teams relied on tools that weren't web-based when the internet connection failed, so the participants' missed out on aggregating the results in real-time but otherwise enjoyed all the benefits of the tools and methods.

The results are discussed below in the "Future Scenarios" section. The Poplar meeting closed with a brief discussion of the purpose and need statement, and Brian Manwaring (USIECR) talked about next steps, and how the focus group feedback would be incorporated into the larger process. Brad Thompson (USACE) provided the wrap up in Great Falls, which closed in a similar manner but focused more on next steps in the process, including the recommendations and requests of the participants.

## Values

Participants discussed their connections with the river by marking locations on a map and sharing stories or concerns associated with these locations. The stories or concerns were grouped by topic.

*Socio-cultural.* Many of the stories and concerns shared included some sort of recreational use on the river such as ice fishing, summer fishing, hunting, and hiking. Several participants mentioned trapping along the river though some of them have

been deterred by limited access. Boating and water skiing were also mentioned, but for some participants these activities are difficult now because the river is not dredged. Shallow parts of the river create challenges for motorboats. Concerns about access to the river or the safety of recreation were prominent concerns in Poplar in particular, where the dam has reduced water temperature and decreased safety. Participants communicated concerns about cultural and tribal issues, including the loss of specific cultural artifacts in the area. The loss of specific locations for vision quests, sun dances, and ceremonies were cited in particular. Participants also talked about the importance of protecting cultural sites and historically valuable sites, such as those related to Lewis and Clark and to early Anglo settlement. Cow Island, the site at which the Nez Perce crossed the Missouri on their flight toward Canada, was one example. Participants also mentioned the importance of other sites without necessarily indicating a desire to protect them. For instance, one participant described the Gilmore Homestead (northwest of Winifred) where her mother grew up. Another noted the location (west of Ft. Benton) that marked the steamboats furthest upriver advance, from which point they would use wagon trains to access Great Falls and Kalispell.

*Livelihood and wealth.* Throughout the meetings, participants emphasized the paramount importance of irrigation, highlighting that agriculture drives the local economy throughout eastern Montana. Concerns about how water flows affect irrigation – how reduced flows could harm access to irrigation water – were particularly highlighted. Participants explained that reduced flows both reduces the amount of water available for irrigation and creates sediment challenges that then inhibit pumping equipment. Participants also noted the economic importance of hydropower development on the river. Some participants felt that the cattle industry and outfitting is a major economic driver and provides some diversity to the economic opportunities in the area, and its success is dependent on the Missouri River. Wind power may be an option for economic growth in the future but is currently not part of the economic makeup of the region.

*Health and security.* One participant expressed concern about arsenic levels in parts of the Missouri River, while many talked more generally about the importance of protecting clean water in the Basin. The question of local interests versus federal interests and control emerged as well, with some articulating a concern that their local interests have historically been trumped by other interests, while others expressed the importance of national values playing a role in management of the Missouri River Basin. Participants discussed their historic distrust of and frustration with Corps in particular. Although the group did not discuss it in any depth it was clear that many of the participants perceive a long-standing pattern of the Corps paying little attention to the interests of local communities in Montana (e.g., access to irrigation flows). Participants said the Corps has engaged communities in past meetings regarding planning, but participants do not know how their input has been considered. The result is that some participants don't feel their input has been considered at all. Many expressed a desire to improve those relationships, and participants in each of the two meetings expressed a desire to see

more public meetings in their respective parts of the state. Some participants expressed frustration over a related concern, a perceived lack of political power, which they attribute to their small population. Without that political power, the communities feel disengaged from planning efforts. For some, this has played out in the feeling that the interests of downstream water users typically trump their own interests. When considering how they might fit within a larger regional perspective, one Poplar participant asked, "Why don't they build more dams downstream so they don't need our water?" Another participant explained that it would be difficult to build dams downstream because of the flat topography. A participant who had previously articulated his frustration at the loss of farming land to river movement said that the river is rocked and dredged downstream; that participant would like to have the same practice happen upstream. Even though the perspectives varied, participants included upstream and downstream interests in their broader thinking. Participants (especially in Poplar) also reference a history of broken treaties between the U.S. government and Tribes.

*Life-supporting/biocentric.* Participants also discussed ecosystem values. While most agreed that wildlife and ecological health are important, some participants in the Poplar meeting were comfortable with a management regime that prioritizes economic values before ecological values, while others felt that ecological health should have greater priority. Many Poplar participants referred to the lack of trees on the river. Whether the trees were perceived as a mechanism to retain farming ground, as important for cultural and historical reasons, or as habitat for birds and other wildlife, everyone agreed that the value of having trees along the river was significant.

## Purpose and Need

The highest priorities for a Missouri River Basin plan identified by participants included protecting the river's recreational values, protecting continued agricultural activities (including irrigation and livestock grazing), and protecting community water supplies. Although they differed in their views on the right balance between national and local needs, participants seemed to share in the belief that both must be incorporated. Participants felt the project should reflect these priorities.

## Natural Resource and Restoration Issues

Following the Corps' presentation at the Poplar meeting, one Poplar participant said, "restoration is a tall order." Participants in both groups discussed the challenges that occur when trying to restore natural processes following man-made alterations, in particular focusing on challenges and barriers. They recognized the political challenges that come from creating a plan with broad geographic scope and the complexities that come from managing for economic growth and species protection. Even when a plan is in place, participants talked about the costs that would surely be associated with such a management plan.

Another challenge for the planning process is the length of time required to complete the plan. There may be personnel changes that create a lack of consistent

project efforts. Species could go extinct before the vision is realized. There may be a lack or loss of interest if progress is slow or lacks distinct milestones and products.

Participants, especially in Poplar, spoke enthusiastically about programs that could carry out restoration activities. One specific idea replicated other projects involving inner city youth who could benefit from the educational opportunities while the community benefited from Missouri River restoration activities. Multiple participants expressed support for maintaining healthy riparian areas (especially in the Wild and Scenic stretch), maintaining clean and healthy water systems for all uses, protecting the existing free-flowing stretches, better planned growth along the river corridor, and establishing better awareness and appreciation of the river ecosystem. One participant noted that much of the Missouri River in Montana is without engineered structures such as dams and levees, and that the local focus is to sustain and protect local activities and the environment while limiting new, engineered projects.

## Future Scenarios

In both meetings, participants identified a number of "indicators of success," future circumstances indicating that an appropriate plan was adopted and successfully implemented. Of the economic and social indicators discussed, three received the bulk of both groups' support: sustained recreational uses of the river, sustained grazing and agricultural irrigation, and water supplies that have been protected and managed sufficiently well to allow for continued community growth. The Poplar group added two indicators: the Corps sharing influence and power with other sovereign nations and other state and federal agencies as part of its commitment to the communities along the river, and linking the river to cultural preservation.

Four ecological indicators received significant interest: healthy riparian areas along the free flowing portions of the river (especially the Wild & Scenic section), clean and healthy water systems, restoration of native cottonwood forests, and the federally-protected fish species trending toward recovery. Finally, there was one additional cross cutting indicator that received significant support: thoughtful mitigation measures protecting both community and national interests.

## Observer Comments

Observers' involvement during the Poplar meeting was limited to strict observation. None of the observers implied that they were uncomfortable with this arrangement, and many stated that they understood the distinction between participants and observers. At the conclusion to the meeting, observers had an opportunity to offer comments and ask questions. Their comments are summarized below. The arrangement in the Great Falls meeting was similar, although the observers were also invited to participate in a separate but identical mapping exercise. In addition, in the Great Falls meeting a number of participants expressed frustration with the observer/participant distinction, believing that it unnecessarily limited the quantity and quality of public input.

Specific Observer Comments:

- The nature of the issues makes it difficult to prioritize or separate project goals. Many of the goals and ideas overlap, and selecting one project goal to prioritize over another caused the participants to wrestle with competing ideas.
- Another observer was unhappy with surges, fluctuations, and priorities for barge traffic. This observer would like to see the river return to a more natural state for species preservation. The more natural state would, in turn, also help the farmers.
- There is value in conducting meetings to discuss planning efforts. One observer specifically mentioned that (1) these meetings are valuable and (2) there should be more of them.

## Follow Up Requested by Participants

Participants made a number of specific requests for follow up by the facilitation team and the Army Corps of Engineers:

- A concise summary of the meetings.
- Consider holding similar meetings in conjunction with the Fort Peck AOP meeting.
- Several participants ask that these meetings be repeated with a wider audience
- Prepare a concise news release summarizing the results of these two meetings for local newsletters, local media, etc.
- Put all the participants on a mailing list for all future meeting minutes and other documents related to these two meetings and the ongoing Missouri River Basin process.
- Incorporate state specific river statistics in the presentation.

## Appendix A: Participants and Observers

Great Falls Participants

- Gayla Wortman – Supervisor of the Cascade County Conservation District, and Coordinator for the Sun and Teton River Watershed Groups
- Alan Rollo – Associate Supervisor of the Cascade County Conservation District, and Coordinator for the Sun and Teton River Watershed Groups
- Lucy Petapiece, Landowner/Cascade County Conservation District Board of Supervisors
- Mary Jones, Friends of Missouri Breaks Monument, Coordinator
- Janelle Holden, The Wilderness Society
- Peggy Beltrone, Cascade County Commissioner
- Janet Fiero America Speaks

Great Falls Observers

- Vicki Marquis, MRRIC/Missouri River Conservation District Council

Poplar Participants

- Russell Kirn – Fort Peck Tribes Office of Environmental Programs
- Dana Buckles – Environmental Health
- Mike Matthews – general public
- Dean Harmon – general public
- Dominic "Steve" Stevens – general public
- Doug Smith – Missouri River Country Tourism
- George Budak – general public
- Larry ??? – general public
- Jeanne Spaur – Fort Peck Tribes Office of Environmental Programs

Poplar Observers

- Arnie Bighorn – Fort Peck Tribes Water Resource Office
- Dick Iverson – alternate to MRRIC
- Richard Kurtz – BIA-Ft. Peck Irrigation Project
- Julie Goss – Richland County CD/ Lower Missouri CRM
- Zara K. Berg – Fort Peck Community College – professor
- Toney Ott – U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- Steve Dalbey – Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks

## Appendix B: Meeting Notes/Video Transcription
## Great Falls, MT
## Civic Engagement Meeting
## August 18th, 2009

**Values Mapping Exercise**

Participant: Changes occurring in small communities along the River (Cascade – near Great Falls) – Cascade is now a bed room community to Great Falls; a lot of retirees. Less folks that can volunteer for the fire department, school boards, etc.

Participant: Town of Craig has lost their school

Participant: Many of the ranches have been converted to "dude ranches" and used primarily for recreation. Outfits hire non-local guides from outside the area for the summer. Services are impacted with high visitation in summer.

Participant: Malstrum AFB – high outfalls cause tremendous erosion that impact the MR.

Participant: Area surrounding Great Falls was settled or developed around irrigated agriculture. Impacts of these practices include runoff (erosion), water quality impacts

Participant: Vaughn/Great Falls are dependent on levees to protect property. USACE will no longer certify the levees. Levee Districts are having to consider private certification though this is very expensive – may have to heavily tax residents and/or increased flood insurance cost of 100-yr floodplain boundary is changed.

Participant: Fort Peck – conflicts between Pallid Sturgeon and irrigators – irrigators have problems with outtakes and spring rise. Pallid Sturgeon spawn as far up the river as the Milk River confluence; float down to Fort Peck Reservoir but die off.

Participant: Environmental – west of Fort Peck the river is considered "wild and scenic". However water quality issues (high arsenic levels) restrict swimming in the part of the river.

Participant: Social – Missouri Breaks offers important public lands

Participant: Native Americans have a long history with the river; cliff dwellings near the Meriwether campsite

Participant: [#14] It has to do with the issues that are around the Pallid Sturgeon and they're a threatened species. They're a very old species of fish, prehistoric almost and the struggles that landowners are having with what the Pallid Sturgeon need to reproduce naturally and what the landowners need to irrigate. So there's the whole issue around the spring rise and the amount of water that's flushed through the system and the amount we take back. Some of the problems are with their irrigation outlets and all of those issues surrounding right there [pointing to dot added to map] on towards Fort Peck. Not very pretty fish, but they're very important species and they are starting to come upstream now even as far as the Milk River to do some spawning because they like muddy warm water to spawn. So it's a combination of economic and environmental issues.

Participant: They do come up to spawn on up this way but when they hit the dam they drop … and they don't hatch. They're spawning, but they wash down the dam and are not reproducing successfully enough.

Participant: I think they tag a few of the little ones. They find a few little ones and tag them. They can track them. Most aren't getting to adult size

Participant: [#15] I put one on under environmental. I put the dot on this section of the river that is wild and scenic but where, at least the part that I'm familiar with, the area is so heavy in arsenic that people can't swim or drink very much. I'm going off what I read, that we are not to be drinking or even swimming very much. Of course a water purifier does not take the arsenic out so it is a problem.

Participant: I was just going to note that the Missouri from Fort Benton to Fort Peck runs through public lands through the Upper Missouri Breaks National Monument and then into the Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge. Both of those areas are very important to the area. It's a social issue, it's economic… you can look at it from a whole host of different scenarios.

Participant: My mother's family's homestead is right in there somewhere. It's the Gilmore homestead and my mother was raised there. That's part of my cultural heritage. It's a neato place. The structures are still there and she can tell you stories that you cannot believe about that place. She knows where the honey tree is.

Participant: I know that we have a great number of Native Americans among us. But we can't forget the cultural significance of the river to the Native Americans. I put that dot down near the cliff drawings along the Missouri near gates of the mountains and the Meriwether campsite. It's a long history that he tribes have had with the Missouri.

Participant: My naive questions; is there still active mining near the river that's economic? Or is it just old tailings?

Participant: There's gold mining still, in the River itself.

Participant: Here is the crossing for the Nez Perce heading toward Canada…. Bear Paw Battle Field is where Chief Joseph made his last stand and it's just south of Chinook.

Participant: [#20] One I'm going to mention just because I've done this and it's lots of fun; we've, many times, put in here at the river at Wilma (?), floated down the river to either Judith Landing or to the Stafford Ferry. It's lot's of fun, so I'm going to say it's economic and social. There are canoe clubs that do do that. We had our own stuff so we'd do it ourselves with small boats like Johnny boats.

Participant: How far does River Edge Trail go?

Participant: It's gets built onto every year, in segments. I think the idea is that it would eventually go to Fort Benton. They're big, ambitious plans for where that would go and now there's a rail corridor between Great Falls and Helena and part of that would be along the river. It's very cool.

Participant: So where did Louis and Clark came from? Where was the portage?

Participant: The portage went around the falls, this entire section, you can put it [the dot] anywhere.

Participant: They went up on the tributaries. They even went up in the [Rias (sp?)] and the Titons.

Facilitator: Are there additional economic links to the River we should identify on the map?

Participant: Many of the ranchers would be out of business, flat out of business if grazing allotments were reduced or eliminated.

Participant: But that hasn't happened?

Participant: Not yet and I'm not saying it will. I'm just saying to this point.

Participant: We sort of learn to live with some of the changes that have been made accept. Some programs have been put in place, there's more communication. But ten years ago there were a lot of generational ranches there that were afraid they were gonna go out of business because they wouldn't be able to continue their grazing.

Participant: I have one economic link that nobody has mentioned that's really a big deal right now in Montana with respect to the Upper *Missouri River*

Breaks. Bill Golt, looking at the entire state, has done a study looking at hunting and fishing and so forth and this area, "the Breaks" is a favorite hunting and fishing place. It is number one to all of those and a very important link to the economy of the Missouri river.

Participant: And is there any human activity that has had an impact on hunting and fishing?

Participant: Oil and gas drilling is one activity mentioned in the study that perhaps will have an impact on this area.

Participant: If you look at these questions [asked in the survey], and consider the social, economic, and environmental context and how these themes often overlap. This is what you were describing there on hunting and fishing -- that the water becomes a key component of the area -- whether it's agriculture, recreation, drinking water, hiking along the trails, or for the simple aesthetics. The water is a central draw in Missouri a central draw for all of these.

Participant: These uses and benefits were there. Many of these stories could be better said if we were able to have put 'em under all categories. They are cross-cutting.

Facilitator: We do and we have these questions in a form of the survey as well as we can collect them as form of story telling on the maps. The maps add a spatial contest to the information you provide. We also really really appreciate you filling out the form if you have additional comments.

Participant: Irrigation projects because that's the kind of dams the bureau can build. Although there is in a hydroelectric power generator. But there is a lot of recreation on reservoir that has an effect on the economy in the area.

Participant: And just an interesting point: Cascade is probably the only one in the state but it has a transportation water right for a ferry across the Missouri because that was how they used to cross it before the bridges were built.

Participant: Is the ferry still active?

Participant: No and I understand we're probably going to lose that water right.

Participant: There's something I just wanna add for fun; something I know the exists in many places around the country, but particularly with this area. This area is rich in fossils and so before it became so widely known there were lots of things you could find. But now of course it's

way protected but some of the locals know where there are fossil bits so it's kind of interesting.

Participant: We got the history here. The first dinosaur in the United States came from here.

Participant: Shipped to France.

Participant: Are the dams mainly for flood control, electricity or irrigation?

Participant: The river and irrigation is a very large part of all the economic activities. The MO River supports the bread basket of the country with its agricultural contribution to the economy.

Participant: At least in my part because of the possible flooding in a hundred years the value of property in the flood plain is devaluing because of the threat in the flood plain.

Participant: I think there is all kinds of issues around the subdivision of the property around the river. We haven't captured that in the comments collected thus far.

Participant: There are pros and con for growth along the river. There are the benefits of bringing it here; you know the benefit of money coming into the area. But there are also issues like septic tanks. Important to understand the cause and effect here.

Participant: It could fit in to all four categories.

Participant: It's taking land out of agricultural production.

Participant: Just to talk about growth you could have an entire discussion, a multiple page list of pros and cons; costs and benefits.

Participant: Well it would have a huge dent on the environment in all sorts of ways but they have to have some flooding over here to actually have a healthy river and riparian area.

Participant: Flooding is natural...

Participant: ....healthy and natural or it shouldn't be allowed to occur.

Participant: If you're building a lot of houses where you kind of restrict flooding, there's all sorts of ramifications having to allow that, of course.

Participant: A few shared issues. There's a lot of implications with crowding around the river...But there's implications to having an oil refinery.....and that's probably...an oil refinery that is staged to grow.

Even though I can't remember if it's at it's boundaries but it's maybe the closest oil refinery to the oil stations. It's owned by a Canadian company and it's the last refinery to remain open after the Clean Air Act. It productes jet fuels still?

Participant: I think it does, actually. Industrial.

Participant: It is a strategic energy, economic facility on the Missouri today but no good reason.

Participant: Just because that's where it is?

Participant: I don't think it was ever operationally important for it to be next to the banks of the Missouri.

Participant: It was probably on the edge of town, at one point, you know away from town but close enough to provide have workers.

Participant: It was getting rail too.

Participant: I'm assuming it was because of the railroad, yeah.

Participant: And there's a lot of economic activity that's happening and scheduled to happen along the Missouri in Great Falls to clean up environmental issues. The County took back in taxes the first oil refinery. And we have a huge clean up that we're doing because of that. So we're going to clean it up, that's true. There's acid mine drainage at the Belt Creek Mine that's coming in to the Missouri. And it's also going to be a lot of resources to clean up. We are asking the government to nominate the RCRA railway refinery and the town is and they're all on the Missouri...And just today writing a letter, making sure the river is cleaned in the process.

There could be bridging and other things that end up happening to clean the river up. So I think it could be a substantial impact on the actual clean up from that now.

Participant: So we're almost at our point for ending this exercise. The...I'm curious...you know...growing up next to a river, we used to go every week and swim in the river, but then people are always surprised too; because it's not the cleanest of rivers. Do people feel like the water is not clean enough to swim?

Participant: It's too dangerous.

Participant: I mean the river; I mean you've got the rapid flowing water.

Participant: We do a lot of water skiing. From Bay (?) to White Bear Island there's a lot of water skiing; there's slalom course. Some of them are going. So

there's a lot of water skiing. The river itself as they say is pretty dangerous.

Participant: Cause they had to build swimming pools to prevent kids from swimming in the river; because we lost quite a few kids.

Participant: So it's just a hazard. In terms of the water quality, is it swimable?

Participant: If you keep your mouth shut. Don't drink it.

Participant: They call it the muddy mole for a reason I think.

Participant: And we ate dinner at Eddie's diner last night and the waitress talked about her experiences water skiing; it was a big part of her childhood.

Participant: We used to ski a lot.

Participant: But at one time, according to....probably your relatives too...you could take water out of that Missouri and let it settle down, the water was pure as can be and had a very good flavor. That has changed.

Participant: Well that'd be a reason. Even less, maybe even less it was still very good water.

Participant: Well I know that...my mom was born in 1931 there at the

Participant: Gilmore Homestead and they hauled water out of the river up to the homestead for years...using a team and barrels. A lot of times, that's all they had was river water.

Participant: Once it settled down to, it was good water to drink. You wouldn't necessarily want to do that anymore. The world has changed.

Participant: Well and not to blame people. When I was in engineering school, we were taught that streams cleaned themselves in a certain length. Well, there are just too many people using them anymore and the river doesn't have the opportunity to respond.

Participant: This coal mine belt that we're trying to clean out was the mine that took coal to the steam ships in Fort Benton. Took them a week by oxen; hard to get mine...hard to get the coal to Fort Benton...how far would it have been to Fort Benton?

Participant: Across the country?

Participant: By oxen cart.

Participant: Yeah by oxen carts longer.

Participant: 20 miles itself...20 miles outside of Greenfields (?), what's this like?

Participant: Well they would go across...they went across through Pinewood. So my guess it was probably...I bet it was 50 miles.

Participant: Nez Pearce – Crossed wild and scenic section of the River. Bear Paw Battle Field.

Participant: Lewis and Clark – discovered headwaters for Missouri

Participant: Impacts to Agricultural users (grazing permits) within the Monument (?) – great impacts if these allotments are reduced or eliminated.

Participant: Study on hunting and fishing showed Missouri River Breaks as #1 location for fishing.

Participant: Water from the river is key to recreational uses, agriculture, aesthetics and communities for use.

Participant: Chinook Area is rich in fossil beds – geodes to bison remains – 1st dinosaur found in US was from the Missouri Break area

Participant: Tributaries are just as important to all these uses as mainstem (see #15)

Participant: Nine dams in MT; some are private

Participant: Agriculture is important component of economy and is dependent on the river

Participant: Great Falls – economic development along the river; future floods will cause problems for this development.

Participant: Need areas that the river can flood in order for the river to be healthy.

Participant: An oil refinery is being proposed near the river in Great Falls; closest facility to tar sands region in Canada; will produce jet fuel.

Participant: A lot of environmental clean up along river in Great Falls.

Participant: Belle Creek – acid mine drainage

Participant: May be a super fund site at ARCO Refinery

Participant: A lot of water skiing along the river but it is dangerous to swim in; A lot of communities built community pools so kids wouldn't swim in river

Participant: Water quality is o.k.

**Indicators of Success**

1. What does the USACE mean by "restore"? What will they restore to?
2. National interests for mitigation need to be balanced with local community/economic interests – shouldn't have negative impacts on local communities
3. Just because a local community has a certain view or practice doesn't mean it should continue if it harms national goals.
4. Protect community interests while balancing national goals
5. Basin stakeholders are working together to resolve these issues
6. Ft. Peck Reservoir should remain full – maximize recreational opportunities and irrigation use.
7. Native Cottonwood Forest Ecosystems regenerating – indicator of success
8. For Montana, need to protect free flowing sections of the river and sustain existing uses.
9. Healthy riparian areas in wild & scenic sections – indicator of success
10. Pallid Sturgeon are recovered or on way to recovery – indicator of success
11. Consider taking dams out
12. Grazing allotments stay in place; irrigation is maintained.
13. Clean and health uses of water systems for all users
14. Weed control
15. Remove salt cedar from around Fort Peck Reservoir
16. Sustain recreational uses
17. Greater public awareness and application of river ecosystem
18. Maintain hydropower generation capacity
19. Pump storage
20. More equitable distribution of water rights (power companies have significant share)
21. Smart growth for river corridor – currently a lot of development occurring along the river between Great Falls and Helena
22. Sustainable water supply

**Challenges**

1. Water rights
2. USACE Policies – bias towards engineering solutions; there are other values that are more important in this part of the basin; think outside the "USACE Box"
3. Sharing of limited water especially during drought conditions.
4. For Montana, the geographical distance and low population
5. Inter-agency coordination
6. Engaging stakeholders
7. Balancing all the human needs on the river
8. Money and resources
9. Climate change

**Opportunities**

1. Look at all agencies/programs to see how they can be tweaked to improve implementation (benefits of river) – e.g. CREP
2. Listen more/better to those who work the ground
3. Urban corridor study was complete in Great Falls in last couple of years
4. Improve feed back loops
5. Alternative energy development
6. Improved environmental understanding creating more opportunities of environmental restoration programs.

## Appendix C: Meeting Notes/Video Transcription
## Poplar, MT
## Civic Engagement Meeting
## August 18th, 2009

**Values Mapping Exercise:**

Participant: So I've been fishing all over the place. And there's one place I fish over here and I noticed that the river is over 100 feet from where the road used to be down there it stepped back…

Daisy: Okay there's some fishing…

Participant: I used to work for the irrigation department over there and every year we had problems. There's an engineer over there, I'm sure he's aware of it now, so he could visit that place over there now. That's the fluctuating of the river, in some places you know.

Daisy: What's that?

Participant: The fluctuation of the river.

Daisy: So we're getting into some of the problems and I'm very aware that there are problems and challenges that we're talking about. I'm hoping that we can start a little more, with a little more about some of your experiences that you've had. If you want to say the problems we can certainly do that. But maybe someone has just a little two-minute story they can share.

Participant: The other thing I'd actually like to say too here is the channel now is wider and there's not much water in it. Now before, we used to have two big rains a year--one of them would come in March they have come off the local area here. And in June we get the one from the mountains and when it scoured the river you have a nice sharp channel and then it doesn't move like that now. Now it's a mile wide doesn't look like... and you gotta put water in.

Tape Cut

Participant: And it's really important to us family memories two of my girls were back in Iowa so hopefully that's something they think about and remember. But the times they did have here. Another is well part of my job or part of our like the Army Corp work is go out and keep track of the least terns how they're doing and their hatching rates and success. So that definitely fluctuates with the amount of water in the river. So that something that is important to me as well

Participant: I guess my biggest concern is the big money as far as irrigation for economics. I've farmed for four years here and I've always heard of big irrigation projects that's to begin. Forever we've had just the small area where the government and the states pump money in there for irrigation but it's never given throughout the rest of the river. It's a largest section, 70 something, skirting the edge of the reservation. The Fort Peck tribe has millions of acre feet of water that runs through the area today and the tribe is not using anywhere near the capacity... I guess that would be my experience with the economics in terms of the farming but also in addition I've been hunting and fishing all of my life here. The ecosystem here on the river is very important to all of our fish and our wildlife. So my interest is there and I'm still picking up a few more areas of important economic points for the Fort Peck tribe and the people that work here that's I guess all of the concerns: environment, social, cultural, economic all of it. The river is not being taken care of. The fluctuation of water due to Fort Peck dam is hurting the environment. And not only just river fish, fish in our lake are being hurt by this. But I guess my concern is I have never in my lifetime heard of the Corps of Engineers who wants to work with anybody else. I guess my concern is how we are going to get something done.

Participant: I put the red dot here for the past 10 years of massive irrigation system to cover 20 to 30,000 acres of in here. And I'm a fisherman and a hunter also.

Daisy: Okay and so you fish and hunt in that area your concern is the irrigation boundary might affect…?

Participant: Well the thing I'd like to see discussed is what pluses or minuses are. Irrigation by farm helps the economics of the reservation and all around. So if you like to fish you know it's something you've done all your life since you was a child, it's something you hope to do until the day you can't do it anymore.

Participant: Three weeks ago I was out with the BLM on trail that goes South of Fort Peck, it's an 8 mile hike that goes through the badlands, all contiguous federal land and then it's CMR refuge and then it's Corps of Engineers and they all have different policies on how to coordinate all that to get trail development through there. There are no hiking trails in Eastern Montana I look at the primary form of recreation for tourism we don't have it we should have it. We have the most wonderful resource. So I'm working on trying to get a trail through there. The BLM have a budget of 10,000 to deal with the initial startup work and just start with mapping it I have yet to sit down with the CMR refuge people to see if they'll stop it or if they have a problem. I understand these things have to be in an agency plan to be funded and that takes five years something like that.

I also do archeological investigations I've investigated two or three sites on the south side of the Missouri river and I've come to the conclusion that these sites were associated with buffalo crossings on the river where there's a natural crossing on the river. This one up stream a little bit from Fraser there's one in there I think. So there's cultural sites on the river… and another historic investigation-- I was looking for the river boat that sank south of Fraser. We thought we'd found it and Myer came up with this plane we took pictures, but it turns out it was the Fraser ferry that sank.

And another thing as far as recreation this river is terrible for recreation because it's colder than hell, the water comes out of the bottom of the dam, it's freezing cold even on the hottest day I mean it has to be damn hot before you jump in that river because it's ice cold. It affects fish--the sturgeon aren't going to go in the cold river. And I also cut willows I made baskets from a cottage industry and I cut those during winter. After December, they're pretty much shot because the Corps releases water from the dam which creates the level of the ice, so we can get water under the ice and it doesn't scour the river bed and it floods all the sand bars with willows on and they're just locked in ice and it kind of ruins the willows. I don't know how the beaver feel about water and winter after they've tied up the brush, cut their holes in the bank and all of a sudden in the middle of winter they're flooded out it's got to be tough for wildlife that depend on this water.

Participant: This whole thing--your cultural and your economic-- is through the whole river. The part where I'm from is down here on the tributary on the Big Horn River…while the people are high enough so they can use their end of the dam and the fish get over so you can maintain fisheries. So we have the cultural requirement and then you have the economic-- people coming in for farming and then you have the social impact the people who are getting as close to the river they can. We got people building lodges and keeping them, and they are close to the river. Our concern is that the water quality, which is the whole river, and the water quality is for fish and wildlife and people. And you notice more and more people are buying groundwater. They don't take that it from the river. But in some places they have the ground water is next to the river and with the water rates coming up you have a private water pump that's being considered by tribes. And the water which they have, they might not use the water but you have to come up with a ways if you can market that water, you have a flow of so many feet and then you can sell that to somebody down the stream. It isn't as bad today than it's gonna be in the next 20 to 30 years, when

more and more people demand more and more water and we have such a large amount of water in Fort Peck. And the other was try to maintain as much as they could to hold it in upstream part, because you know that everybody downstream who want it. In our area we're lucky, we have variable rates, and they're killing themselves and killing each other over it …as that goes downstream talk about the erosion, here it is very important. And then the water quality gets worse and worse as you go down the stream...the Otter...and a little bit storage area, is the one that was put there by the to establish the [IB] irrigation system there...

Participant: I'm from two places. My mother's grandparents settled on that side of the line, my fathers parents were on the other side.

Daisy: Okay

Participant: I mean we're 8 miles from the Dakota line. I want to touch on what was said, everybody likes to recreate. Those us along the river accept that, now, he was saying that the water is cold. Fundamentally it's true, what he didn't say is the currents go away from the direction of the Missouri, there's whirlpools, there is submersed rocks with that much draw on the surface. So if you take boat down there too fast it'll take the There's lots of hazards in the Missouri in this region. I'm not gonna speak about the other sector that I know nothing about, I do know something about this ridge. My primary concern is economic… I think if you look, I gotta back up just a sec. I listened to "red and blue" and I thought wow, there is red and blue states and why go that way, I really got nervous. I hope this isn't.. from that sense Montana is in the middle, it's kind of a zero on the red-blue. But I would like to say from an economic standpoint, I don't have the figures, but since I started developing irrigation on the river, I would guess that there is probably 30 times more than when I started in the 1966 my first irrigation.

Daisy: There are 30 times more irrigators?

Participant: There are 30 times more than when there was when I started, because with more pivots upstream, here again I speak mostly on the North side the Roosevelt County side. The Richmond County side, the home side, I don't think there were any big irrigators in 1966. It was all developed basically in the last 25 to 30 years-- not before then. It was some land leveling before that and they're still continuing. What I'm trying to say is our small communities have been decimated because of the… farm prices for agricultural products, the next generation sees no future, they go away. If they marry a city girl they think they can't bring her back because they think "why in the world would anyone want this life". But my point basically is, if we develop the economic aspect of the river, whether it's through the tying of development

rights… So there is a lot of constructive things that are being done with water and not necessarily just economic development but that is necessary for economic development, good water, as are good roads. But finally I want to touch just for a second on I said "aesthetics" you say "environment"…I think a lot of us at least along the river. But the Fort Peck dam was built in the 30's--it's essentially eliminated re-growth of the cottonwood which is a hallmark tree in this reach of the Missouri. I'll only speak for this reach because I'm not involved in a lot of others. I don't think that we'd want to have a the Fort Peck Dam, and I'll tell you that in just a second, but first you have to understand that the normal life expectancy of a cottonwood is approximately 100 years. Today we probably have about 30 to 35% of the cottonwood is already dead along the river. I know from observation, we don't want…along with losing the cottonwoods we have Dutch Elm Disease come up the river and I don't know if you guys around up here, this far up know, we've lost almost all our elm trees. So even if it's a dry winter, it doesn't do a thing about it. So that's what I what I talked about when I said use the word aesthetics, reforestation. I don't know anybody who has any plan or even vague idea of reforesting the Missouri river cottonwood, not in the part that is presently under agriculture. I developed a lot of irrigation, but I never cut down any of the trees either and I would like to think a lot of the other developers who have done mostly the same thing. I think... finally we've go to not only look at that aspect of this sense and full down payment of whatever plans that's developed because without trees along the river. I don' think any of us would think that and I have been there a time or two and I was almost appalled of how few tress there are now. I thought they were a lot more but there aren't so... that's one of the things I would like to see. I think there is ample opportunity for, for sportsmen and fishing. I created a hunting business and I protect it, I protect my people.

Participant: Back up a little bit to where you were talking about tree, trees and stuff I was told by some old-timers that along the Missouri and our local rivers here there used to be a lot of various currant bushes and stuff that had disappeared over the years--a lot of the natural berries, you got raspberries and black berries and stuff like that don't exist anymore because of the cold waters coming down.

Participant: I'd like to add to that. I think we farmers we have to take some responsibility for that. We went through a period of time when all of all irrigation of our crops and I think hurt these particularly, the berries.

Participant: I don't know I guess when we talk about trees too, it's, you know when you talk about the culture way back in the early days. Different

types of people had different types of sites along the river. There were sites for sweat lodges.

Participant: I saw we were talking about livestock along the river earlier. And trees and in the last 20 years you see berry bushes, what happens with a lot of our stuff around here you know our livestock they've got bushes and then the berry bushes and then in the manure you see that. And all those trees are gone now.

Participant: The resources we have along the river, you have to fence it off.

Participant: Is that what they've been doing?

Participant: You know I noticed another thing around fencing, and that's the water access. The community fence off any kind of access you had going to the lake, like in winter we used to do a lot of ice fishing not it seems that you can only go so far and they lock it off you know, and fine you if they can, if they catch you going out there.

Participant: And just, just like... not too long ago in that area over there when the water comes up…everybody was camping down there, they didn't want anyone else camping there so they put across a whole bunch of posts up there. You know there is a lot of people who used to like to go down there and fish, and fish at night in the river and whatever. Now the park closed it off.

Participant: So let's take a recreation, recreation in terms of the benefits the community gets from the Missouri river. You mentioned ice fishing, camping along Duck Creek, somebody, Doug, mentioned it being too cold people for who would like to swim there. What are some other ways that people recreate around here in regards to the river?

Participant: Excuse me, I think that access should be one of the main topics because the access controls everything business, fishing…

Participant: You don't have much access on the reservation here to Missouri.

Participant: Well, if the access isn't built correctly it's going to cause more damage to the river. You've seen that on some of these... on the reservation side washing out, rain, the irrigation; water washes everything out.

Participant: What about boating? Boat...

Daisy: Okay. Do any of you guy's boat or water ski?

Participant: Just when they have that river... the gentlemen that came to the Missouri River…

Participant: Louis and Clark.

Participant: Louis and Clark. Then had to boat up the country through Ottawa. They drove them up and then they had to wait to see how deep that water was. They wouldn't go very far and they'd get stuck in the sand bars because Fort Peck does not flush that river around like they used to do it before the dam come in there.

Daisy: Okay.

Participant: It just would be mud flat up here, most of it. You're lucky to find a good hole for fishing anymore.

Participant: They didn't know there was about three about different rapids over there…

Participant: They'd go out ahead of the boat and then they throw that weight down there and they'll see how deep that water.... They had one stuck on the sand bar. They'd wallow in and pull it out and then move it out to different places to get it to go up river-- that river is not like it used to be.

Daisy: Okay. So what other kinds of recreation things gives something back to your community whether it's because you need to do more than yourselves or because other people come in? You've got tourists that come in to look at that.

Participant: There used to be a lot of traffic down the river. Now you don't have no access down there. We used to go down and go boating, trap beaver or mink or whatever was on there, but I don't think in the last ten years they'd even make it through there.

Daisy: What else would you trap besides the beaver or was that the only one?

Participant: Well, those beavers and mink.

Daisy: Mink?

Participant: Yeah.

Participant: Yeah. Then was the muskrat and...

Participant: Otters.

Daisy: Otters? They're so cute, though.

Participant: So we have a group in the north of the river that canoe the river every year and I see all the kids swim in the river.

Participant: I think the access problem is less people along the river, you don't have good access—no fishing, no boating. The Corps of Engineers, seems to have battled that, fears…

Dasiy: Trying to keep them…

Participant: Yes.

Dasiy: And why do you think that is? What's underlying that? Is it...?

Participant: It's cause they can't.

Participant: If you allow it, you have to keep track of it.

Daisy: Okay.

Participant: It's not part of your master plan….Corps (unintelligible)… not a lot of flexibility.

Daisy: Okay. Well, I'm tempted to make another page that says why we need the Corps, but I think I'll hold off…Let's see more into economic.... Fill me in a little bit on hydropower as far as who benefits from hydropower. Where could you say that lies? Is that, is that a larger community maybe?

Participant: No, I think the most of that hydropower comes out of at Fort Peck it ships westward. The power here in Poplar comes from coal plants out of South Dakota-- the coal mines NREA. Not used here in Montana. There are some wood power plants near Shelby, most of that will go to California now instead of being here in Montana. Farmers can think about wind.

Participant: And is there a wind generation around here?

Participant: They got a couple on up here about, but I don't know if they use they use them a lot or not.

Participant: It's a new...

Participant: If you put that cap and trading well, they're going to rip our price apart. REA will go up and price will go down. I think the others will be putting up windmills here to generate their own power. Cause you can't afford to pay for the light bills anymore.

Participant: Our needs aren't as demanding as the needs of other states for hydropower and electricity.

Daisy: So it's also a lack of political power. And I think someone mentioned before; I think it's going to be tied with economics cause we're talking

about populations. It's difficult to do anything about this if there's, if there's what? Help me finish this sentence…

Participant: Cold winter.

Daisy: I'm not sure the weather is going to be one of the core …

Participant: The key word is justification --then you don't have to be part of the population.

Daisy: What's that?

Participant: You can't justify the need. That's the key word there is justification.

Daisy: Okay, you can justify the need for... [tape cut to next section]

Daisy: So I want to try to take a little bit of a leap here before we stop for dinner and I'd like to know how you all feel like these issues and your community fits in with the bigger Missouri River Basin, or if it fits in with the rest of the Missouri River Basin in this state. I know that you mentioned a little bit about you feel as though people downstream want the water that you have upstream and that's a little bit of a relationship between the community and other people and we've also thought that downstream people may not care as much about your issues because there aren't as many populations up here. What are some other ways that you feel like you... either connect or don't connect or have a relationship or don't have a relationship?

Participant: You should be thinking about downstream parts of the Missouri, we're all part of the Missouri. They probably feel the same way as we do. We don't even care about it. We don't have the population out here so they don't care about us.

Participant: Why don't they build more dams down there on the Mississippi so they don't have to be taking so much water from up here?

Daisy: Right.

Participant: So when they need it they can release it down there.

Daisy: I'm just gonna write your question down.

Participant: So we've got some pretty big issues up here obviously--we need up here at Fort Peck that water issue in here. You know, the lake is so far down, went to court and they were supposed to set up some better plan and bring it up to date and everything and I don't think they ever did. ..They were supposed to have some kind of a plan out there, and there's water and everything, you know. As far as I know they never they didn't did do it.

Daisy: So follow through or follow up on their plans.

Participant: Yeah.

Participant: They're always saying that the water that was down below was (unintelligible) this chart at the Harrison Dam, there's a lot of more of it than this chart at Fort Peck…

Participant: That's so important…

Participant: But water flows through the …

Daisy: Okay so just in general, the idea of the one…

Daisy : So to get the flow…

Participant: And the other thing is to have here at Fort Peck, get to have that rise in the spring and the one in June. It used to be triple the rest of the year and wash out the mud when the rains would come.

Daisy: So that's not the case now?

Participant: No they collect in the interior of the banks most of the time and make everybody that's got an irrigation system down here--you're usually gonna lose it or you have to dig in the mud to get to the water. To get to your pump.

Participant: Fort Peck Dam releases 6,500 CFS every 16 hours. Some people don't, particularly if you talk about dams somewhere else, it's not going to happen, partly because it happens somewhere else. I haven't followed the Mississippi or Missouri to the Mississipi all the way down, to where the land is flat around New Orleans. If built a dam around there you would be flooding tens of thousands of acres. Secondly... there's a rapid step to a more natural flow. I didn't know what they were talking about. At one of my irrigation sites I met with an engineer in attendance for a two-day thing they did, I wish they'd come here first. There's a certain amount of release called flushing, that the Corps agreed to, and I don't disagree with that, but when they start talking about 35,000 CFS that's more than flush that's a flood, and for those individuals (I like to be controversial)--for those individuals who would like to make this perfect amount and have natural or as close to natural, I wanna tell you I got a ten year report in 1994 of a decade in the 80s when the Corps of Engineers flow of water, that would pop your eyeballs out to see whether that makes sense. For instance there is at least three days, three periods in that year that the in- this is measured by inputs in to the Dam, so this is accurate. You had 60, or 70,000 CFS going down that river. Now those of us who farm along the river what would 60 or 70,000 CFS look in your farm. And then

there was one little blip in there that is rapidly falling it's this blip--140,000 CFS, and that is a lot. So I called a guy in Omaha. I said "Hey is this a good number?" And he said "No I don't think so, I better come over there and I'll call you back." In a short time he called me back and he said "It is a good number." Now if any of us had more than 140,000 every day, if the 80's were typical of the native river scene, we'd lose it all. Our best producing areas go right down the river. So, I am a huge supporter of Fort Peck Dam. I hope it's there forever because it is very, very valuable, not just for recreation use, but for what it was built for--hydroelectric power and flood control. Those are the two things that dam was built for with the federal... our taxes. I don't think, was there a third one? Speak up …those were the two primary things and it has worked for that, if we...I could I can live with, let's say, oh 20, 20 or 24,000 CFS release if there wasn't much tributary flow. But if you get up to 35,000 with the flushing that you have now it's gonna do a lot of damage.

Participant: If you rewind it, and we used to have them before, you don't have flat river like we've got now, you have to channel it.

Participant: Sure

Participant: And we have, water, in 1964, when it run over the top of this spillway gates, it took two years almost three years in the following years to run that water out of there and we had it bank to bank. But in low spots they're filled with water but that's its natural resources like they had that flood in Iowa when they broke the dykes along the river. The area where the farm was, the land that was at one time under water, and when it drained, it goes down again. The same thing will happen here if you run that much water through. Our river has got no channel to it, it's flat--actually a mile wide practically in most places.

Participant: But the only solution to that, George, in my view is to do exactly what they've done in some places in Europe and some places in the lower Missouri and Mississippi and that is to build some sides.

Participant: Go down to the State of Iowa--if you go down and look at the Missouri river there, it's rock on both sides all the way down and they got to dredge it to keep the channel deep enough. But with here-- if you wanna put a little pile of rock and debris near your bank to return your, turn your ground they won't let you but if you put a house there and it falls in they'll do that. Or a car …if you wanna be able to build a little jetty out there, you can't, they won't let you do it.

Participant: I think that's absolutely nonsense.

Participant: I don't think the people down in the South realize that a lot of the farming stuff was area that was dried up marshy areas that was

naturally wet. In Western farming and they did that just to make farms, and that's what the river is for, it is their protector.

Daisy: And that is to make farming here or downstream?

Participant: Down in the south.

Participant: It's like cities like New Orleans and such.

Participant: I'd like to believe giving a little away from the Missouri-- on that dam that was built on the upper river what was that back in 75?

Daisy: What date is that?

Participant: (Unintelligible) River Dam was built in the 70's across the border in Canada, but I just wanted to use that as an example of what George was talking about, the control of it to keep the flooding down. Well, the flooding is the natural cleansing for these rivers. We're in... You know, after they put the that dam in, I was raised up on that dam, and moved out there in 1961. We used to ride some icebergs down there. So there's spots like two miles across that were icebergs end to end.

Participant: Yeah. Well, I can remember here …

Participant: The ice would actually wash out the river bridges.

Participant: Okay.

Participant: And then after the dam was built in Canada the river has just steadily gone down hill. Now I've been working at an office in Laramie, taking water samples for the last two summers out there and it's … It's just... the water is falling. It's going down. It's just never been naturally cleansed. We don't flood. But I'd like to... how that one came to the natural flooding that needs to be done, you know, where George is sitting.. and eventually it needs to be, and now the Missouri needs to be flooded. All the sand bars would be washed out.

Participant: You'd have that one, one deep channel.

Daisy: Well, on that note...

Participant: Now, see if you... if you remember back here a year or two years ago when they turned on that water out of the Hoover Dam and flushed the Colorado River out?

Daisy: Yes.

Participant: They had to scour the bottom out till everything was getting to be where it wasn't producing anything anymore. And you got to do that every once in a while, to get that bottom cleaned. Now what have we

got now? It's just like this table top. It's wiped. And if you put.. turn a bunch of your water out, it won't do much good until you get that channel dug in there. You need to bring that big drag line in there to get busy on it.

**Observer Comments and Final Voting**

Daisy: [Commenting on voting]We're going to be writing a report on these things afterwards to turn in. So I'd like to hear a little about how those two were different. How those two are different in your mind or why you might vote for one end versus the other end if you're comfortable saying in front of the group.

Participant: I think the difference on the cultural preservation is that it has a future with the irrigation, a future for economic improvement. Whereas when you're linking your relationship with the tribe in the communities that is more of cultural which is not, this is embarrassing, it's not as outstanding as the... the need that our communities have right now for economic advancement compared to cultural advancement.

...

Brian: So the... this... I from the next steps moving from here. These... we're having this meeting. Obviously there's a simultaneous meeting going on in Great Falls. So so there's gonna be a report planned with that meeting as well. That'll be distributed to you... we're gonna have these same meetings in six other states and the US Institute will kind of tie all those results together into one report give it to the Corps of Engineers and then it's theirs to incorporate into the study. What... the plan is that those four items that are discussed in the presentation, future scenarios, purpose and meaning and, scope. The other one is... were the social economic values and the natural resource issues. Those are four separate chapters in the EIS. All of that stuff will get incorporated into the EIS... all this stuff will get incorporated in some way. The Corps is accepting input on all these things from a number of different groups and cooperating agencies in public meetings separate from all these groups. So they're going to be looking... it's going to be a complex issue but their effort... all the input is going to be taken ... essentially at an equal level. Like no one group gets it priority over another . It's all input, and they'll be looking for consistencies across these things, but then in other cases they're going to say this is what the public wants. This is where the stakeholders want this to go. This is what the states want and so on and so forth, but all this stuff will somehow be assimilated and collected and reported out. So that's kind of the next steps as far as what happens from this meeting. The next public period, a public input period is going to be that phase two that I

showed you earlier which ends at the end of next year. That's going to be the next opportunity for public input in this process.

...

Participant: I thought it was kind of interesting listening to it. I think everybody was for saving the tern or whatever, and ....

Daisy: Everyone was what?

Participant: Everybody was for saving these endangered species. I think that was kind of obvious and yet also there was a lot of economic development stuff that came out, the community development or whatever. Some of you have probably read some of Aldo Leopold's things, and you know what he said about conservation that a farmer will do conservation if it is economically possible to do conservation, and actually I kind of looked at this whole group whether you're a recreator or a teacher that wants to take one of your students out to the river or a farmer that wants to raise your crop, you'll do all these conservation to restore the river or whatever. If you're a teacher and you have a job, you can take the kids out. If there's no economic community...there's probably no need to have a teacher so there would be nobody out there to enjoy the river and so I guess my observation is we're all for this restoration and saving the species, but we all... and to go hand in hand with that we need to maintain a viable economic community to actually enjoy it if we save it. That would be my observation. I don't see how you can pick anyone one thing, whether it's river access, buffer zones, cultural resource. It's all important if you could tie it back some how or another maintaining your job or somebody's job, or a viable economic community.

Daisy: Any of the other observers? Or any other final comments or criticisms?

Richard: I'd like to comment on... If you don't know me, I'm Richard Kurtz. I'm a BIA Irrigation Project Manager. I guess there are two paths to this. I live along the river too, so professionally I have a stake in it. As far as the irrigation project is concerned, I'm managing a vary old irrigation project that's got a lot of problems and a lot of those problems are related to how the river is managed. We...all our irrigation water comes out of the river through two pump stations. We pump about 60,000 acre/feet a year. If the river's not managed well, that creates a difficult situation for the pump stations and ...then impacting the livelihoods of 311 people, about 7 or 8 million dollars of annual economic impact to the farmers and ranchers that I serve, over 25,000 acres. And that's from the confluence down to River point. I currently...professionally am not satisfied with the priorities set on

the river--the barge traffic and all this other stuff and the way that...the way the river's managed as far as it's surges and fluctuations--that's really got me concerned. It doesn't seem to fit very well with the cultural point of the...through an endangered species side of it either. The (?) Building and things like that. These surges are creating a lot of problems, not just for my pump stations, but they're creating a lot of problems for the supply of the flow of the natural river system. I'd like to see it get back to a more natural state myself and I think that would serve the irrigation project better as well. As far as a private citizen, I want to see a more natural state, I really do. I...this is...you know right at the beginning I said this is one of the most heavily managed rivers of the country. Do we need more stabilization? Do we need more management on the river than we've already got? I'm not so sure that's true. So... that's just off my head and those are some opinions. I like what they're doing here, I wish there was more participation in the community. As a matter of fact, I went to the public meeting over at the interpreters centre at Fort Peck Dam on the 12th, and there wasn't any more people than there is here at this meeting. But they put up flyers and questionnaires that looked something like this. When I got back, I gave the Water User Association that I manage the project with...100 copies of this and their giving it out to their...to 100 of their membership and hopefully we'll get maybe 50% back. But hopefully they'll get...you know...they'll get a higher response from those people that are living, raising families, trying to...you know...develop a livelihood along the river. Those are the farmers and ranchers and landowners, both tribal and non-tribal. The project's 50% on Indian... it's got some real problems. It's an aging project, so that's kind of my outlook on that. These are important meetings, they are a lot and you could see how people tend to just disappear as the meeting goes on, but here's an opportunity if you want to have a meeting, send the questionnaire.

Jocelyn: So before you actually write anything on those sheets, if we could just get a really quick response from you by voting on this slide. How satisfied overall were you with this meeting? One is very satisfied; two satisfied etc., number five not satisfied. So if you could just press the button real quick to give us a quick snapshot of how tonight's meeting went.

Jocelyn: Yes. Okay next. Would you participate in future MRERP public meetings? And then the survey techniques were a little bit more chance to be specific about what happened today, okay. [Voting result, 100% would be willing to participate again] That’s very encouraging and we'll be very glad to see you all. And again then the paper gives you more opportunity to be qualitative in your response.

Daisy: So let's... we will send out how we summarize these votes. You will have an opportunity to provide some comments on that and otherwise we really appreciate you coming in and we really appreciate those of you who were die hard, and stayed till the end in you know so thank you, that's it!

**MRERP Civic Engagement Meetings Fall 2009**

**Final Report**

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# Attachment F

## Nebraska Report

# Report

## MRERP Civic Engagement Meeting

## 9/17/2009
## Omaha, NE

**Prepared by**
**Werner Institute, Creighton University**
**Public Policy Center, University of Nebraska**

# Report

**MRERP Civic Engagement Meeting**
**Omaha, NE**
**September 17, 2009**
**Prepared by**
**Werner Institute, Creighton University**
**Public Policy Center, University of Nebraska**

## 1. Introduction

The meeting to discuss the Missouri River (MR) included 16 participants representing *community* organizations (e.g., Omaha-Council Bluffs Metropolitan Area Planning Agency, Neighborhood Center), *environmental*-related organizations (e.g., Sierra Club, Wachiska Audubon Society), *not-for-profit civic organization* (League of Women Voters), *private sector* (HDR Engineering), *residents* (four people identified themselves as local residents), *tribal* interests (Iowa Tribe of KS and NE), and *university*-based outreach and extension units (Creighton, Iowa State, and University of Nebraska-Lincoln). Some of the participants represented more than one interest group and/or constituency. In addition, there were five observers. Although people in the region representing diverse perspectives were invited, the people who attended were people who in general are highly supportive of restoration. There was only one representative from industry (not a river industry). See Appendix A for a list of participants and their affiliations.

## 2. Methodology

Nearly 50 individuals and organizations – from agriculture to environmental and conservation, from the private sector to the traditionally underserved – were informed about the civic engagement meeting. They were contacted used multiple approaches – emails, postal mail, and telephone – and asked to let others know of the meeting opportunity in what is sometimes termed "snowball" fashion. Initially, state representatives on the Cooperating Agency Team (CAT) were asked for their recommendations and help in distributing the request for participation. They emailed the meeting info to their colleagues and asked them to forward any recommendations for invitees. See Appendix B for invitation materials and the list of invitees. (Note: Some organizational contacts are not included because we were referred to the group but were not given the name of a contact.)

The general guidelines for reaching out to individuals and organizations were:

- Community leaders.
- People with pre-established communication networks.
- Those who are interested in the Missouri River and water-related issues.
- Traditionally underserved groups/areas.
- True members of the public, without a major organizational stake in the MRERP, MRRIC or other Missouri River projects.
- No federal or state employees unless they are representing themselves, and not their agencies.

- A mix of those who see the Missouri River from fresh perspective, and those with a historical perspective of the changes in the river.

We sent to the U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution and the Cooperating Agency Team a list of various local, area, and state organizations and groups with an interest in the Missouri River and to whom we had extended an invitation. Invitations to participate were then sent from the Institute to these organizations and groups.

The general public was also invited via a notice in the area's largest newspaper, *Omaha World Herald*. There also was a brief announcement of the event on the day of the event – the announcement brought in at least one individual who said he read about the engagement meeting in the morning's newspaper. See Appendix B for a copy of the media release.

At the civic engagement event, small group and entire group activities were undertaken to allow participants to learn about MRERP issues and to provide input about their attitudes, feelings, and opinions related to MRERP. See Appendix C for an annotated agenda. An initial welcome and overview were provided by the conveners (facilitators from Creighton and NU were: Mary Lee Brock, Anat Cabili, Steve Perigo, Helen Shew, and Alan Tomkins,) U.S. Corps of Engineers/MRRIC (Karla Sparks, Kansas City District) and U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution/MRERP (Brian Manwaring and Sasha Storz). Because of the number of participants attending the meeting, it was decided at the outset to have participants individually introduce themselves rather than talk in pairs, as originally contemplated. A MRERP overview was presented by the Corps representative, Karla, and then participants rotated through discussions, in groups of four to five participants, on three value themes: social context and identity, community, and economic vitality. A facilitator was at each value theme table, and s/he remained there for the entire period of this exercise. Participants were asked to split up, so that the participants would have a chance to hear from and interact with different people across the three discussions. A report out from each theme was undertaken, primarily offered by the table facilitator, so everyone in the room would hear the highlights. Thereafter, future scenarios were discussed, after which a full group report out took place, and then participants were introduced to the MRERP draft purpose and needs statement ("Moving Forward") by Brian Manwaring (project program manager, U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution) and were asked to discuss the issues, and a final group report took place afterwards. Finally, final perspectives, including from the observers, were provided, and the conveners explained the next steps, including a sharing of this Report for participants' comments and clarification. In the next three sections, we provide syntheses of the input from the participants, followed by a final section of input from observers at the meeting. In addition, a more detailed listing of issues raised and values discussed are included in Appendix D.

## 3. Values

<u>Biocentric or Environmental Values</u>

The Missouri River (MR) is understood as a critical habitat, and most of the participants mentioned their concerns about protecting species. The diminution of wildlife has taken its toll; the river is not used the way it once was. The MR is seen as a primary source of water and energy (e.g., water for cooling the power plants), and it takes waste away. "It's what we drink, bathe in, [and use] to water our grass," observed one participant. But the MR is fragile, and the need for action is urgent: "There are dominos

that can fall here, and impact everyone's life," cautioned a participant. Most people lamented the state that the MR has fallen into: "I would like to see a river here, not a ditch," one person noted pointedly. It was suggested that a premium be placed on ensuring successful restoration of the MR: "We don't have the mountains and sea here, we have a river."

Socio-Cultural Values

Participants argued the MR is integral to the health and well-being of the communities located along its banks, as well as those communities located on its tributaries and even those away from it. Part of the value of the MR is its role in the aesthetic of the communities along it. One participant noted that, "I like to look out at the river." The MR offers a buffer from the harshness of city life, it is a place to get away and connect with nature. The River is a core part of the community's natural environment, and it provides a rural experience in a very urban, Omaha environment: As one participant put it, the MR creates "a Midwest experience."

The MR is also recreational, used for boating, canoeing, fishing, camping, walking/hiking, and concerts. While at one time the MR was more in use for boating, fishing, hunting, and even recreational-related commerce (one participant reminisced, "We used to buy melons on the river: They grew the biggest and best"). Several people spoke about the new Bob Kerrey Bridge spanning the MR. The Bob Kerrey not only allows for community activities, it bridges (pun intended) the gap between IA and NE. The Bob Kerrey Bridge is used for walking over the MR as well as along its banks, and it has connected the bicycling communities on both sides of bridge. A participant noted that it is used frequently by families: "You can see families enjoying the bridge and connecting with the river."

Livelihood and Wealth Values

Most importantly to many of the participants, the MR is an economic driver. Whether it is the socio-aesthetic reason for businesses to locate their headquarters along the MR (ConAgra, Gallup), the businesses that are part of (or could be developed to be part of) the recreation industry associated with the river (e.g., marinas and boats), or part of the reason for the revitalization of the Old Market area in Omaha, the MR continues to be associated with current economic success and future possibilities. Participants talked about the MR being part of their potential employer's recruitment pitch. Several participants mentioned there should be a more intentional, holistic approach to the MR: Businesses and policy makers should recognize the interrelation of commerce, aesthetics, recreation, and entertainment-cultural activities that involve the MR.

Without the MR, living costs would rise. Participants observed drinking water and food would be more expensive, and there would be devastating impacts on agriculture (it is a major supply of water for irrigators), and, indeed, "the supply and cost of everything around us. " One participant specifically noted that power and water supply expenses would increase, and another gave an example of his Tribe having to purchase an acre of land at inflated prices to secure a supply of water for the community because the Tribe did not have access to the MR. Other participants mentioned fear of pollution that would make the water from MR undrinkable.

Health, Safety, and Security Values

There were fears expressed about the MR. The river is filthy, and a former lead refinery discharged toxic levels of lead, arsenic, and other heavy metals into the MR (as well as into the city's air, and in and

around the23-acre, industrial site). There is also trash and debris strewn throughout the river, and some people reported fear of crime along its banks. Because the community's waste water goes into the MR, there is a health fear about disease. Some participants expressed reservations about making personal contact with the MR: "I was on a boat on the river that ended up taking on water. My friend who couldn't swim was worried. I told her not to worry about not being able to swim, the real problem would be swallowing the water or getting it in a cut." Moreover, the MR is so fast and deep there are concerns regarding safety around recreating on the river ("You're a goner in an accident," suggested one participant). The speed of the MR precludes the use of small boats in this area and is otherwise a barrier to full use of the river for recreation.

Overview of Values

Overall, the participants viewed the MR as a vital part of the socio-cultural, economic, recreational, and overall quality of life in the area. This is an old story, according to the participants. Historically, the MR has been "incredibly important" to the area – it is the reason that people settled here, and it is how many people got to these communities in Iowa and Nebraska in the first place. Along with the railroad, the MR brought goods and products in, and it took goods and products to other locations. Although it may mean less to many now, it is still critical, whether people in the area/region know it or not.

Four overarching values were identified by the participants:

1. A clean and natural river, with a restored eco-system that can sustain natural populations and that has connectivity to the human population that uses it and lives around it.
2. An attractive, scenic, and aesthetically pleasing river for people to enjoy, a river that people will want to experience and will be excited about.
3. Diverse and dynamic habitat for species (e.g., safe havens for migratory birds, appropriate habitat for endangered and compromised native species such as terns and plovers).
4. Educating and raising awareness regarding the importance of the river and its eco-system.

Most of the comments about the restoration of the MR were positive. There were some participants, however, who criticized the subsidization of navigation on the MR: "There are more costs than value obtained from supporting navigation," argued one participant. Another participant remarked that the economic impact of the MR is in the past, related to industry and manufacturing, whereas the current impact is recreation, and aesthetics. The majority view, though, is that the MR is critical to the well-being of the region.

## 4. Future Visioning/Scenarios

At the conclusion of the restoration activities, the hope was that the MR would be more enjoyable to future generations (including the *average person*) in many different spots, and that it would a healthy, not polluted, and sustainable river, and that its economic values would be maximized – for example, direct economic impacts, related to recreation and tourism, as well as indirect ones, related to businesses using the river to showcase the vibrancy of the community and the region in its recruitment of new employees. It would be a wider river, one that has public "ownership" and will meet the needs of native species populations and preserves native habitats.

Several opportunities were identified. For example, it was stated the plan should assure there is the opportunity for more connection (including but not limited to opportunity to access) to the MR. Connectivity, it was suggested, will create sustainability because people will be invested in the river and want to take care of it. A restored river, another participant observed, is one that will be a food resource. In the past people fished commercially on the MR. At a minimum, it should be a source of fish for personal consumption.

> "Life will be different in many ways in 30-50 years, but we would still like the next generations to enjoy the environment and to be able to do the outdoor activities that we used to do several decades ago."
> – Participant

A few specific suggestions were offered, some of substance and some regarding processes:

- Slow the river down, in order to provide backwaters.
- Replace ox bows to increase species habitat.
- Work with appropriate government jurisdictions (states, cities, counties) on zoning as there needs to be restrictive zones or greenways/parks by the river and restriction of development in the flood plain.
- Manage the land adjacent to the river; for example, buy easements along the river.
- Planners should promote offsets or mitigating actions for industry when the river or species are hurt or polluted.
- It is important to maintain balance between agricultural use of the land adjacent to the river and the interests in other economic development.
- Improve collaborations with state and local stakeholders because buy-in is essential.
- Rather than a static plan, it needs to be an adaptive plan.
- Natural resources should be prioritized over economic development.
- Utilize innovative technologies.
- Need to make the ecosystem more natural, and it will be able to absorb changes, such as climate change.
- Projects need to be self-sustaining; the government cannot keep investing large amounts of money into river restoration.

## 5. Moving Forward: Reactions to the Purpose and Needs Statements

Several participants wanted assurance that restoration was the priority. Although it will not be possible for the MR to be as it was – it is beyond the "tipping point" – there was virtually unanimous concurrence that the MR needs to be fixed. It was noted the plan should be titled "re-creation" not "restoration" as it is impossible to restore the river to its previous state. The final result "won't be close to what it once was, but it will make it better."

Two of the natural resources the participants thought should be addressed were 1) threatened and endangered species, and 2) habitat on the floodplain. The participants mentioned that the habitat is a natural feature we have lost.

Barriers to successful restoration will be plentiful. They include:

- The presence of invasive species such as salt cedars and wild parsnip (poisonous to humans). Some of these invasive species are ongoing threats to native species.

- The adverse impact of agricultural practices (land use, fertilization runoff, etc.) on the river, along with non-agricultural land-use practices (e.g., chemicals used on residential lawns and subsequent run-off).
- Human modifications such as channelization lead to species eradication (e.g., mussels) and degradation of sandbars.
- Releases of water from dams create drastic and fast changes for river species that are not used to such adaptations.
- The lack of low land flooding decreases nutrient loading of waters.
- Soil erosion will continue to be a challenge.
- Overpopulations of species, such as deer and wild turkeys.
- The decline of floodplain prairies.

Despite the reality of the barriers, the participants, on the whole, were cautiously optimistic.

**6. Other Observations**

There were concerns regarding the comparatively small size and the lack of diversity in the group. The process was complimented – it seemed to be good, and it allowed for lots of input and consideration. Suggestions were offered to increase representations of such discussions in the future, specifically holding them in the evening.

**Appendices**

Appendix A: Participants and Observers

Appendix B:  Invitations

Appendix C: Agenda

Appendix D: Details of Participants' Perspectives

Appendix A
Participants and Observers

| Participants Name: | Organization: | E-mail Address: |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Jim Ducey | Bird and Nature Photographer | jeducey@hotmail.com |
| 2. George Tangeman | Creighton University | georgetangeman@creighton.edu |
| 3. Alan Ladd | Iowa State University-Extension | aladd@iastate.edu |
| 4. Bobbi Holm | University of Nebraska-Extension | bholm2@unl.edu |
| 5. Larry Cieslik | HDR Engineering, Inc. | Lawrence.cieslik@hdrinc.com |
| 6. Bev Traub | League of Women Voters | bebtraub@msn.com |
| 7. Glenn Pollock | Sierra Club | pollockg@cox.net |
| 8. Pat Jesse | MAPA-Omaha | pjesse@mapacog.org |
| 9. Elvin Shew | Local Resident | apairofshews@gmail.com |
| 10. Crystal Rhoades | Neighborhood Center | crhoades@unomaha.edu |
| 11. Don Preister | SOETF | donaldpg@msn.com |
| 12. Alan Kelley | Iowa Tribe of KS and NE | akelley@iowas.org |
| 13. Ken Reitan | Wachiska Audubon Society | kareitan@inebraska.com |
| 14. Mary Ann Krzemian | Local Resident | None Given |
| 15. Rick Spellman | Local Resident | rickaspellman@aol.com |
| 16. Vince Shay | Local Resident | vshayhome@msn.com |

| Observers Name: | Organization: | E-mail Address: |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Jason Skold | Nature Conservancy/MRRIC | jskold@tnc.org |
| 2. David Sieck | MRRIC | iowafarmboy@gmail.com |
| 3. Marian Maas | MRRIC | marian.maas@cox.net |
| 4. Gene Zuerlein | CAT Representative | gene.zuerlein@nebraska.gov |
| 5. Randy Sellers | USACE | randy.p.sellers@usace.army.mil |

Appendix B
Invitations

## Nebraska Missouri River Public Participation Meeting Invitees

| Group/ Agency/ Perspective | Contact Name |
|---|---|
| **Agriculture** | |
| Nebraska Cattlemen | Mike Fitzgerald |
| Nebraska Extension | Vernon Waldron |
| **Business/ Chamber of Commerce/ City Planning** | |
| Cass County Chamber Business Development | John Yochum (formerly Sarpy County official) |
| NE Economic Development Office | Tom Tabor |
| Omaha By Design | Connie Spellman |
| Omaha Main Streets | Vince Furlong |
| RDG Planning and Design | Marty Shukert |
| **Diverse Viewpoints/Traditionally Underserved** | |
| Conference for Inclusive Communities | Barb Angelilo |
| Neighborhood Center of Greater Omaha working with community groups in Douglas, Sarpy and Pottawattamie Iowa | Crystal Rhoades |
| Omaha Table Talk | A'Jamal Byndon |
| Omaha Voice | Jim Esch (also former candidate for US Congress) |
| Individuals with Disabilities | Mary Angus and Kathy Hoell |
| Homeless/ Shelter population Stephens Center or Sienna Francis House | Cindy Oelke and Tim Sully |
| Nebraska Justice Center the community based mediation center serving NE Nebraska | Jane Martin Hoffman |
| The Resolution Center the community based mediation center serving SE Nebraska | Judy Pingle |
| Concord Center the community based mediation center serving Douglas and Sarpy counties | Debra Blue |
| Harrison Street Baptist Church | Roger Criser |
| **Education** | |
| College of Saint Mary Service Learning/ Omaha Envirionment Coalition | Jennifer Reed Bouley |
| Wayne State College Dean of Natural and Social Sciences | David Pietz |
| NE Association of Teachers of Science/ NE Academy of Science | Cecelia Dorn |
| NE Association for Conservation and Environmental Education | Harry Heafer |
| **Energy** | |
| Creighton University Facilities Management and Energy Management | George Tangeman |

**Environmental and Conservation**

| | |
|---|---|
| Prairie Fire Magazine | W. Don Nelson |
| Rainwater Basin Joint Venture/ NE Partnership for All-Bird Conservation | Gloria Erickson |
| National Wildlife Federation | Dan Stahr |
| NE Partnership for All-Birds Conservancy and Pheasants Forever | Jill Liske-Clarke |
| Wachiska Audobon Society for SE Nebraska | Julie Huddle |
| The Wildlife Society NE Chapter | Emily Munter |
| The Nature Conservancy NE Chapter | Mace Hack |
| Falconers Association | Lance Christensen |
| Fontenelle Nature Association/ Neale Woods Nature Center | Tom Arndofer |
| Nature photographer/ conservationist in Lincoln | Michael Forsberg |
| NE Partnership for all Bird Conservation/ NE Parks and Game | Kelly Wells |
| Nebraska Environmental Trust | Shelia Johnson |
| Sustainability Manager Metro Community College | Daniel Lawse |
| Sustainability Director Creighton University | Mary Duda |

**Government Local and State**

| | |
|---|---|
| Clean Solutions Omaha planning for extensive sewer separation project | Linda Lovgren |
| City of Omaha | Marty Grate |
| Metro Area Planning Agency | Pat Jesse |
| Nemaha Natural Resource District | Bob Hilske |
| Lower Platte Natural Resource District | Marsha Babcock |
| Lower Niobrara Natural Resource District | Duane Filsinger |
| Lewis & Clark Natural Resource District | Jack Fuchtman |
| Papio-Missouri Natural Resource District | John Winkler |
| Bellevue City council | Don Priester (also former NE state Senator) |
| Bellevue City council/ Sarpy County League of Women Voters | Carol Blood |
| Omaha League of Women Voters | Linda Duckworth |
| NE Game and Parks CAT Team | Gene Zuerlein |
| Nebraska State Senate | Brad Ashford |

**Recreation**

| | |
|---|---|
| NP Dodge Marina | John Niksick |
| RiverRelief | Vicky Richmond |
| Bicyclists | Shereen Bingham |
| Wellness Council of the Midlands | Howie Halperin |
| Activate Omaha | Kerri Petersen |
| Omaha Bike Club | Ron Mortensen |

**Tribes**

| | |
|---|---|
| Iowa Tribe of KS and NE | Alan Kelley |
| Ponca Tribe of Nebraska | No one specified |
| Santee Sioux Tribe | No one specified |
| Winnebago Tribe | No one specified |
| Omaha Tribe | No one specified |

**Email Solicitation Example**

**From:** Shew, Helen B.
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 09, 2009 9:43 AM
**To:** [Recipient]
**Subject:** meetings on the Missouri
**Attachments:** Omaha Location River Flyer.pdf; Sioux City River flyer.pdf

Hello, I'm writing to ask your help in identifying possible attendees to invite to the public meeting in either **Omaha on September 17 or Sioux City on September 18th.** Can you forward my message below to any people you think would have interest? Thanks for any help you can give.

These meetings will explore many areas of interest including agriculture, history, land use, environment and family recreation. Please feel free to pass this information on to anyone you think might have interest in your area.

The Werner Institute Public Issues Collaboration project at Creighton University is facilitating invited meetings to gain public input from citizens in Iowa and Nebraska regarding the Missouri River, specifically the Missouri River Ecosystem Restoration Plan (MRERP). This is a new basin wide biological study to determine how the river will be managed in the future to suit both the natural resources as well as human needs in the basin. Because we are hoping to hear from true members of the public at the meeting, without a major organizational stake in Missouri River projects.

The summary of the discussions will be provided to the US Army Corps of Engineers as the agency considers future river restoration.

It will be a one day meeting (10am-4:00pm). People can attend either meeting Omaha, Thursday, September 17 or Sioux City, Friday, September 18th - but **pre-registration is required.** Please ask those interested to contact me for further information.

Thank you,

Helen Shew

Helen Shew
CHPE
Creighton University
2500 California Plaza
Omaha, NE 68178

phone 402 280 2646
fax 402 280 5735

# The Omaha World-Herald Ad Order Confirmation

**Ad Content**

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
NOTICE OF FOCUS GROUP MEETING

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), in partnership with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), is initiating a collaborative long-term study authorized by the Water Resources Development Act of 2007. The name of this study is the Missouri River Ecosystem Restoration Plan and Environmental Impact Statement (MRERP EIS). The result will be a fully integrated plan and environmental impact statement (EIS), prepared following National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and USACE planning guidance. Once completed, the MRERP will result in a policy/programmatic-level plan that will determine and describe high-level priorities and criteria for projects that address mitigation, recovery, and restoration of the Missouri River.

The USACE will hold focus group meetings for the MRERP EIS in locations throughout the Missouri River Basin to describe the project and the planning process, and to solicit input on the project scope, purpose and need, issues, and other related matters.

One of the focus group meetings will be held on September 17, 2009 from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. in Omaha, Nebraska. This focus group meeting will include a small group of active participants accompanied by group of observers. This focus group activity is an exercise to trigger both active participants and observers to consider key scoping elements and hear different viewpoints. Participants for the focus groups will be identified beforehand and will reflect a diverse range of communities and interests in the basin. This focus group meeting is also open to observers. Although observers will not actively participate in the exercise, they will have an opportunity to provide input on the content and process they observed. Obtaining input from active participants as well as observers is a central purpose of these meetings. Space is limited. To reserve your space as an observer or for additional information about this focus group meeting, please send an e-mail to stephenperigo@creighton.edu or (402) 238-4156 by September 10, 2009.

Information pertaining to scoping and the overall project can be found on the web at www.mrerp.org. Written comments for scoping will be accepted until December 1, 2009.

Questions and comments specific to the project and EIS should be addressed to:
Jennifer Switzer, Project Manager, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 601 E. 12th Street, Kansas City, MO 64106, Email Address to Submit Comments: comments@mrerp.org

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# *WHAT DO YOU THINK about the future of the Missouri River?*

A Day of Discussion for Iowa and Nebraska

What does the river mean to you? Creighton University's Werner Institute Public Issues Collaboration wants to hear from you regarding the Missouri River, specifically the Ecosystem Restoration Plan, a new basin wide study to determine how the river will be managed in the future to suit natural resources as well as human needs. We're planning a day of public discussion, deliberation and input from Iowa and Nebraska residents. The summary of the discussions will be provided to the US Army Corps of Engineers as the agency considers future river restoration.

This is an invited meeting for members of the public from Nebraska and Iowa. Space is limited. Pre-registration is required and you must be able to attend the meeting for the entire day.

WHEN:
Thursday, September 17, 2009
from 10:00am to 4:00pm

Sign in will begin at 9:30am

WHERE:
Creighton University
Room 3023
Harper Center
20th and Cass Streets

FREE: There is no fee to attend. We will provide lunch. Unfortunately, we are unable to provide day-care services.

REGISTRATION Required:
To register by email:
StephenPerigo@creighton.edu
To register by phone:
402-238-4156

For more information on the project see www.moriverrecovery.org/mrrp

Appendix C
Agenda

**Nebraska MRERP Civic Engagement Meeting Agenda**

10:00- 10:30 Welcome and Introductions
Welcome
Review of purpose of meeting including civic engagement white sheet
Proposed ground rules, clarify roles of facilitators and records & what happens to info
Review and explain agenda pieces
Introductions: Talk in pairs about the role the Missouri River plays in their lives
Then introduce self and something about what they had just shared

10:30- 11:15 Missouri River Ecosystem Restoration Plan Presentation
Includes 15 minutes of Questions and Answers from participants

11:15 Stretch break

11:15- 11:30 Explanation of Values Process
Explain World Café Process
Explore reflection questions around three themes:
Social context and identity
Community
Economic Vitality

11:30- Noon First round of World Café

Noon- 12:30 Lunch Break

12:30- 1:30 World Café continued, including large group report back

1:30- 2:30 Future Scenarios
Participants move to different table top groups

- Imagine it is 2029: Describe a future in which the restoration of the Missouri River ecosystem has been completed.
- What does that future look like? How is the ecosystem different? What do communities along the river do differently? What is the single biggest barrier that had to be overcome and how was that accomplished?
- Given what you have heard, what are three values and three big ideas you want to identify, along with one or two unique ideas worth considering?

2:30-3:30 Moving Forward
Individuals are given copies of draft purpose and needs statement

- What are the strengths in each of the statements?
- What are the concerns you might have about each of the statements?

3:30- 4:00 Closing
Input from observers/next steps/clarify reporting process including participants review

Appendix D
Details of Participants' Perspectives

**SOCIAL CONTEXT AND IDENTITY**

**What is your connection to the Missouri River?**

- The River bring considerable cultural history and identity; Lewis and Clark, people travel long distances to see the museums and historical settings.
- Historical (e.g., Lewis & Clark) and cultural.
- To the tribal members from IA, KS, MO, and NE, the river has been and continues to be a vital resource (cultural and economic).
- Diverse people along river.
- Growing up on the river.
- Live close to the river (Omaha, Bellevue, other geographical proximity).
- Southeast Omaha has a close connection to the river. Residents in Southeast Omaha like the river, but don't like to be in it.
- The cities and universities would not be here without the MO River.
- History shaped by the river.
- See river as the barrier between IA and NE.
- Serves as the boundary between the two states, not only in the Omaha-Council Bluffs area but also down along the southeast border areas of NE and the southwestern border areas of IA.
- Important benefits of the river include: water supply for M&I and cooling for power plants; power, and cultural/history – which creates an opportunity to learn about the river and history.
- Drinking water, home use.
- Home development was shaped by the river.
- For some people, the MR is seen as a ditch. For others, it's a source of recreation (fishing for sport and food, bird watching, boating). For still other (e.g., to people in west Omaha), it doesn't mean much.
- Allows a diversity of people to live in the area.
- Tribal experience where the documentation regarding the access/property to the river was lost; had to buy an acre of land adjacent to the river at inflated prices to get access back.
- Used to be able to make a living fishing on the river, but you don't see commercial fisherman on the river anymore. You can't make a living fishing on the MR. The fact you can't make living fishing anymore takes away from the economy and cultural heritage.
- River is a quieter, softer place to be, peaceful, closer to nature, where I can get away.
- Aesthetics.
- Softness, peace.
- Connection with nature.
- Awareness of river, ecosystem impacts (a "renaissance").
- Agriculture (prime farmland).
- Agriculture and family farms. Family farm on the river provided food for the family and the community: That type of local farm production is important.
- River benefits agriculture.
- Recreation (hunting, boating, fishing, camping) – several participants grew up on or regularly accessed the river and have a sense of family and place related to the river.
- Use river for recreation.
- Recreating on the river – fishing, hunting.

- Opportunity for self, kids, grandkids to fish. Used to fish and hunt down in farmland along the river. Used to buy melons, (they grew the biggest and best down there).
- Recreation… there's a need for the river to be more "user friendly." User friendly=more access, safer (it's so fast and deep you're a goner in an accident). Taught as a young kid to "stay away from the river" Not like the Platte River where you can almost walk all the way across.
- River benefits the bird flyway zone.
- Wildlife is important to the area.
- Want more access and to make the river less dangerous (swiftly flowing river).
- Make river more user-friendly and less dangerous.
- Greater access for recreation to ensure future of community.
- There has been a lot of building in the flood plain.
- "I grew up in the flood of '52. There were tons of fish in the river then, crawdads. Taught us about disaster recovery and preparedness and radio communications. "
- See river as a source of peril (re: flood of 1952).
- Developing lands vs. preservation of habitat.
- Bridges provide access to move development, which gets rid of important prairie habitat.
- Poorly designed waste water treatment affect the quality of the water in the river.
- Human activities increase pollution of the river.
- Silt in the river causes pollution.
- Maintaining the wildlife of the river is important – pallid sturgeon and paddlefish, for example.
- The river sustains us if we sustain it. It provides a connection to the earth. "Softer" than the harshness of the city.

**<u>COMMUNITY</u>**

**What does the MO River mean to your community?**

- The reason the Omaha community exists: It is the livelihood of the community and the livelihood of the Midwest. The development on MO River has been beneficial to the community.
- Economic development & jobs. There are even more opportunities than are currently being utilized. For example, we haven't done much in developing *visitor* economic development.
- Economic development can be non-factory types (low environmental impact).
- Water Supply.
- Power generation/ethanol plants.
- Entertainment.
    - Walking the riverfront.
    - Community festivals and celebrations.
- Escape/buffer from the harshness of the city.
- Bird Watching.
- Photography and other recreational opportunities.
- Fishing.
- Balance – recreation, enjoyment, habitat, development .
- People have a habit of taking the river for granted.
- Some Negatives:
    - Path to casinos for NE residents.
    - Scary/dangerous place. T he MR is not welcoming due to crime that takes place on its banks, the trash that is strewn on and around the MR. It is a difficult place to access.
    - The fast river current is a barrier to people recreating on the river – it's dangerous.

- Very few access points to do recreational fishing or put a boat in. Decreases recreational use.
- Contaminants ("revolting, gross, E. coli, you can see the raw sewage actively being dumped into the river" and would like to see it cleaned up).
- Place for suicide.
- Riverfront is "too much concrete." (But, the concrete is covering the Sarco contamination.)
- Channelizing the river.

**How does the MO River affect your community's quality of life?**

- Our community is built around the river. We wouldn't be here without the MR. That's what got the explorers going were they did, that's where the transport and movement came from. Before the white explorers, the MR was a resource for Indians. The whole area has been the location for communities, first by the Indians and then by the white settlers, because the MR is here.
- Provides drinking water.
- Provides jobs and commercial opportunities. It has long benefited the economy. The north-south river was the reason for the placement of the east-west railroad. The MR has been attractive to people and businesses that have to move goods.
- The MR is important to economic vitality, including the industrial community, power generation, ethanol production – all these contribute to quality of life.
- Important to have MR as a continued asset, but at the same time, concerned about water quality. Use to advantage while preserve its quality.
- Provides recreation places. Recreation has increased, which improves connection to the river and connection with other members of the community.
- The river offers a respite from the harshness of city life – a place to get away and connect with nature.
- Vegetation and trees around river adds to air quality.
- Lack ability to get full use of river. For example, the barge traffic potential has never been reached (not evaluating whether good or bad). Development of ethanol has changed shipping.
- Regionalizing- use things where they're made.
- Barrier to access to enjoy the river. The river should become more "user friendly." In particular, the need for more safe access points to the river was emphasized. At present, there are very few access points for recreational fishing, boating, etc. which are decreasing activities. This is partly because of private lands along the MR.
- River unattractive and unsafe.
- Reduced locations to go fishing.
- Sludge and pollution have limited the usability.

**How has the MO River shaped the culture of the community?**

- The river is a central piece of Nebraska's cultural identity.
- The MR formed the identity of Omaha and the rest of NE. Industrial and agriculture related communities related to the river. The MR is here, so the offices were built here, and the people came and still come.
- The availability of water draws people to the area. (Several people would like to enhance water quality and increase recreation.) But the point is, people want to be around water. Now, few manufacturing plants, shipping uses. The draw becomes aesthetic, at least in part.
- River is the biggest body of water in the area and recreation has been shaped around it.
- The river helps bring people together and generate similar interests.

- Industrial plants and meat plants have opened along the river due to shipping availability (both historically and currently).
- Drinking water from the river is critical to sustaining quality of life. River supplies all our water. Without the river, even w/ aquifer, the community wouldn't be sustainable. Preserving the health of the river is necessary to sustaining our quality of life because it's our source of drinking water.
- Culture of fear due to dangers associated with the river; people recreate elsewhere because of their fears.
- Physical and psychological barriers separate the people from the river.

**How might the MO River shape the community culture in the future?**

- Balance between environment and economic development.
- Balance between use of resources and preservation.
- Less manufacturing, fewer manufacturing jobs.
- People will be more aware of the river and ecosystem.
- More attractive river. If the river was more attractive, people would use it more, which would be a boost to the economy.
- Just knowing that there's a river is a value. Like to look out. It's peaceful, it's nice.
- People will better appreciate and enjoy the river.
- The areas that are accessible need to be better publicized and made even more accessible (Tobacco Island, for example).
- More accessible river leads to increased economic development and more jobs.
- More accessible river will bring the community back together. There are fewer physical barriers now to the MR. Before, you couldn't access the river. Now you can, but it's time to take it to the next step and get people on the river. We can use the river to create a new culture around the river and nature.
- More communication from the community will build support to continue improving the river and making it accessible to the people.
- More outdoor interactions.
- Community health will improve – activities around the river will lead to more healthy and active lifestyles.
- Less flooding = more opportunities. The flooding has been controlled. They're trying to keep people from relocating along the river. It is very costly to relocate and rebuild.
- Sustainable energy generation. Power is important- We're talking about generating power, and the role water can play in that.

**<u>ECONOMIC VITALITY</u>**

**What does the Missouri River mean to your community/state's economic vitality, diversity and sustainability?**

- Broadly speaking, in the past the river was essential to people's livelihood due to its major role in transportation. Said one person, "The River is very important to the area; it drew people to it and stimulated economic development. " Said another, "Omaha is here because of the river and the transportation it provided."
- In addition, businesses like SARCO (now Spirax-Sarco) were key economic drivers in the community, many businesses located along and used the river, and these businesses' locations and reliance on the river (e.g., as part of the manufacturing process) are one of the reasons why the MR was important to the community. Now, it has to do with recreation along the riverfront.

The Old Market and riverfront areas, the concerts that take place near the river, the river walk, the pedestrian bridge is a visitor destination – this all contributes to economics and also identity.

- The river's condition definitely affects economic vitality. For example, decreasing of fish species affects fish prices, quality of water affects water bills as well as prices of farmers' produce. It was therefore suggested to look at economic viability in a more *holistic* way.
- The river's use as a disposal spot for treated water.
- **Recreation -** recreational activities have significantly decreased in the past decades and most of the Nebraskans are disconnected to the river. As one participant mentioned: "There are people who are not even aware of the river's existence." Others mentioned that most people "prefer going out to the movies or eating in West Omaha and don't even consider the river as a recreation option." Recreation should be diversified. Recreation activities that were mentioned, albeit referenced regarding their reduction, were boating, fishing, canoeing, camping, walking (including the use of the Bob Kerrey Pedestrian Bridge), concerts, etc.
- **Transportation (Navigation/Barge Industry) –** historically, Omaha was located at a strategic point for transportation, and the river played a major role in that regard (it was the link to the railway to the West/East). This was, suggested several participants, unique in the US. In general, many agreed that in the past the river played a more major role economically. The participants thought that nowadays the navigation industry is much less important in the region. There is no barge industry in this region at all from Blair to Sioux City. Grain transportation from the area has decreased. It was mentioned, however, that more fueling stations and marinas may support the barging industry and the overall economic value of the river. One person mentioned it is necessary to stop subsidizing navigation – more costs go into subsidies than value returned.
- **Farming/ irrigation – t**he importance of the river to farming and irrigation were emphasized several times (including regarding private gardens' irrigation).
- **Source of energy –** the river's use for heating/cooling processes in nuclear and power plants was mentioned (a question that emerged in this context was how restoration will affect that; another participant raised the question of whether these heating/cooling processes affect habitat life). Without the use of the River, power costs and water supply costs will increase.
- **Gambling boats –** these boats are not operating at the moment, and are "just sitting there."
- Some participants said that the river means "virtually everything" to the economic vitality, diversity and sustainability of the community, as the river is what drew people to settle this area and is an essential part of the community's *identity*. Omaha's identity is intertwined with the river. Young people enjoy it, attend concerts at or near it, the pedestrian bridge brings people to it as well as parks along the river and other river strips. The pedestrian bridge has connected the bicycling communities on both sides of the MR and has had beneficial economic impacts, and it promotes family interactions – you can see families enjoying the bridge and connecting with the river.
- The river is a source of employment opportunities.
- The river's importance regarding local tourism (especially in hard economic times). Access to the river should be improved. Access is key to connecting with the river -- private riverside developments currently are preventing access to the river.
- Community would not be here without the river.
- Historically important to industry.
- Navigation is not as important now.
- Recreation and entertainment more important now (but there is a need for more access).

**What does the Missouri River mean to your own economic vitality?**

- Some of the participants mentioned that most of the river's economic value is industrial, and therefore it doesn't affect their own *personal* economic vitality.
- The importance of the river as a major source for reasonably-priced household water – that is, drinking water, bathing water, and water for the lawn. The MR is major resource for energy and power. The river is still used for these purposes, even it is not like it used to be. Without the MR's water, the cost of living would increase and become unaffordable for many.
- Destruction of natural habitat and ecosystems could potentially impact economic way of life, whether impacting crops or the water quality being too poor for personal consumption. All connects directly to the bottom – water payments, taxes, food supply costs. People often ignore that there are dominos that can fall, and they will impact everyone's life.
- The use of the river generally affects employment.
- Provides livelihood.
- Keeps cost of living reasonable.
- There are three commercial fishermen working on the river.
- The river allowed us the ability to live here.
- Power generation and water supply are available at lower cost.
- On a very personal level, the back to the river initiative is what brought my husband and I here- the jobs brought us.
- The importance of the locally grown food at the farmer's market- fresh and nutritious. Taxes go back to the economics of the river.
- More opportunity for local recreation.
- The river's importance to people's quality of life.

**How would your community be economically impacted without the use of the Missouri River?**

- Some participants said they did not think the community will be significantly impacted by the lack of use of the river. One even mentioned that the lack of use may have a positive impact. Another participant answered, "I don't know."
- We would need to access water from somewhere else.
- The importance of the river for water supply, power generation, waste water treatment.
- Increased costs of water – water bills will increase. Drinking water and food would be more expensive. Could have devastating impacts on agriculture. Could have devastating impact on supply and cost of everything around us.
- No use of the river for drinking water supply may impact ground water use and may even cause water conflicts with other communities (a potential for "water wars" because other communities rely on wells and the supply of water might be impacted if the Omaha area could not rely on the MR as its main source of water).
- The MR is important to the communities that are on or near it. It is a source of drinking water and the river takes away waste. It's also a source of electrical needs.
- The lack of use of the river will have devastating impacts on supply and cost.
- The effect on transportation – it will be difficult to transport. Equipment hauling, barges – would be costlier if other methods had to be used to transport. It's about efficiency
- If use of river is not economically viable (i.e. navigation), it should be eliminated.
- The effect of lack of use on agriculture – that will ultimately affect prices of farmers' produce.
- Farming and irrigation systems will be affected.
- Lack of viable ecosystems would have adverse economic impact.
- Lower quality of life would decrease population migration to this area.

- Less social migration to area would decrease economic development.
- The effect on waste water that may even cause health issues and diseases.
- Recreation opportunities would decrease.
- River is underutilized (pedestrian bridge allows some access/opportunity to view the river).
- Concerns regarding flooding.
- No use of the river will bring the community "back to basics" – no water, no place for disposal of waste, etc.

**FUTURE VISIONING/SCENARIOS**

**What is your vision for a restored MO River in 30 to 50 years? What conditions and features would be present?**

- The Missouri River is more enjoyable and accessible to future generations (including the *average person*) in many different spots. It is a healthy, not polluted and sustainable river, and its economic value is retained and maximized.
- More attractive and scenic river.
- River will be wider – look like the area around Ponca State Park.
- Missouri River will look more like the Mississippi River in that there will be more activity, festivals, wildlife viewing areas, tourism, small boat activity, etc. "People along Mississippi identify with the river, whereas people along the Missouri do not identify with river."
- Public will be active in decisions that promote the river.
- Synergy, people will live with the river.
- Housing, people will live near the river (but out of the floodplains).
- People will realize the importance of the river and have an "ownership" in it.
- Excellent water quality.
- Urban lofts and living, development that's not industrial, retail, restaurants, museums and education centers, reconnect to the value of the MR.
- Small business activity around MR.
- Restoration, sustainability, and connection.
- Making river more accessible leads to more concerts and activities in the parks.
- Festivals on river can bring more awareness.
- Parks.
- Education and awareness.
- More recreation with small boats and canoes.
- Increased numbers of biking and hiking trails.
- Cleaner water and natural, diverse habitats for all species.
- Lack of lowland flooding and its impact on nutrient loading.
- We will meet the needs of the native species populations.
- Communities will value and preserve natural habitats.
- Make economically attractive with ecosystem protection.
- Tributaries should be re-meandered (they currently are more like canals).
- Health of the community is linked to the ecosystem – water quality, recreation, swimming, drinking water, eating fish.

**Underlying assumptions regarding the vision:**

- "Life will be different in many ways in 30-50 years but we would still like the next generations to enjoy the environment and to be able to do the outdoor activities that we used to do several decades ago."

- People don't know what they are missing ("we paved it and made it into a parking lot"). People in Omaha are not interested in the river. It was the group's hope that for the next generations the river becomes more useful to recreation, fishing, boating, etc.
- Sustainability is key to achieving the vision.
- It is important to keep providing opportunities for people to reconnect to the river (i.e. concerts, fishing, walking and other *attractions*) and to provide *safe access* to the river!
- It is importance to have *infrastructure* that encourages use of the river. Infrastructure can be – camp grounds, biking trials, access, fuel stations for boating, etc.
- When people spend time outside, it improves community health. This increases overall quality of life, reduces health costs, etc.
- It is important that the river interfaces with the natural system.
- The MR needs holistic management to make sure it meets all needs. The connection between ground and surface water is important.
- The importance of *balancing* between the traditional use of the land adjacent to the river (i.e. agriculture) and the stress of economic development.

**Barriers that were identified regarding the vision were**:

- Funding and costs.
- Short-term gains.
- Politics.
- Other priorities for public funds.
- Other policy priorities.
- Apathy.
- Opposition.
- Real estate development along the river.
- People's attitudes. There is still a psychological "barrier" regarding the MR.
- Perceptions about lack of safety that are not representative of what actually is the case.
- Private landowners and squatters on public lands.
- State attitudes and reluctance to enforce rules. State does not protect its interests, so private interests can claim/purchase land along the river, and the private property is a barrier to accessing the river.
- People must be accountable to consequences.
- Unknown factors (such as climate change) -> the need for adaptation was hence emphasized.
- The disconnect between rural and urban interests is extremely dangerous because if people take the river for granted, they don't see the interconnectedness and they don't understand that the river's abuse impacts their lives, then there is a vulnerability to not having the requisite support to transform the MR in the future.
- Out of sight, out of mind: If people saw the sewage go into the water, they might think about how they were using their water. You need to see it to "believe it." Not just the yucky parts, but the nice parts, too – fishing, boating, bike riding, family activities taking place around the water.

**How will the ecosystem be different?**

- Invasive/non-native species will have been addressed.
- Avoiding artificial manipulation of the water (like sturgeon chutes).
- River will be allowed natural evolution.
- Riverfront housing will diminish.
- Natural ecosystem will be more elastic and absorb more climate changes etc.
- River will be promoted for natural resources instead of economic development.

- When a person or company has an impact on the river, they will be required to mitigate their impact.

**Big ideas:**

- **Restoration of eco-system** – an idea that emerged regarding this value was "the need to make it economically attractive for people to contribute to the restoration of the eco-system."
- **Sustainability: "A healthier river that can sustain the natural populations" –** an idea that emerged regarding this value was again related to economic incentives: "economic incentives to encourage sustainability."
- **Education –** this value was identified as a "hugely important feature". An idea that emerged regarding it was "raising awareness and cultural education" regarding the importance of the river's ecosystem. It was noted that nowadays "nobody focuses on the future" and that we are a "throw-away society." The idea underlying education and raising awareness was enhancing self-responsibility as well as enhancing public awareness that will motivate public decision-makers to see the river as a high priority. Raising awareness was also connected to making interesting attractions at the river (i.e. festivals): "Look at entertainment, parks, ways to draw people to the river so they have a better understanding of the river. Anytime you can bring someone to an area, there are educational opportunities just by being there, and it changes the way people view their natural resources."
- **Reconnection: "Back to the River"** – the value of reconnecting to what the river meant in previous generations was identified, *while* acknowledging the various challenges that exist today.

**Values:**

- Need for cleaner, more natural environment and water.
- More attractive and scenic river.
- Excitement to be part of the river.
- Reconnect humans to the river, in particular, and nature, in general.
- Support community connection in a sustainable way.
- Build community identity along the river.
- Foster artisans and small businesses, festivals along the river (similar to what exists in Brownville, NE).
- Attracting industries (like medical) to this area with an attractive river, infrastructure, green space, and parks.
- A corridor for migration of species needs to be maintained: Bird friendly corridor.
- Preservation of wildlife habitats.
- Diverse and dynamic habitat for all species.
- Need to recognize the economic value of natural state of the river.
- Emphasis on non-motorized recreation on the river.
- Economic pressures on agricultural lands affect water quality.
- Development should be restricted through zoning requirements.
- Structures and dredging in the channel has impacts.
- A participant talked about being born and raised in Omaha: "I remember when I was small, people went down to river and put sand bags out to prevent flooding. I haven't noticed that problem lately. To me, the MR is part of Omaha's identity. The history and the Indians are important to me. The early days and the development: Prospecting, devious business with land claims, interactions with Indians, the history of Omaha connects to the river and is part of who I am. "

- A participant explained, “My connection is pretty limited. I understand it as a resource; because of water, Omaha expanded from the river. It is exciting to see development along the river: Conagra campus, Miller’s landing. These places draw people back to the river, but I think the cultural identity has been lost as people expand westward and people don’t notice the impact the MR has on them.”
- A participant discussed the divide between NE and IA: “My connections are business related. The river is a brick wall, even though there is a bridge that crosses it. People won’t call Council Bluff’s phone numbers, so it was common to use Omaha numbers that connect to Council Bluffs phones. Council Bluff is the stepsister in the area. It is gambling that draws Nebraskans to Iowa.”
- Not everyone agreed about a Nebraska-Iowa divide. A participant argued there is a “Midwestern feeling of locality that is not city-specific.” She mentioned she used to regularly get ice cream made in Iowa, and she was upset when she stopped being able to get the ice cream from Iowa.

**MOVING FORWARD**

**Barriers/Problems?**

- Lack of information availability and sharing, no central storehouse for accurate, real-time data.
- Attitudes of people involved.
- Lack of public awareness, lack of interest in river.
- Bureaucracy gets in the way of effectiveness.
- Water availability.
- Dams, levees, dykes: Effects of water manipulation.
- Up-stream storm water runoff.
- Private land ownership.
- Possible climate change issues.
- Humans try and use the most cost effective method, which often abuses the resources, such as dumping sewage.
- Ag producers are using every inch of land for production – need to leave lands for buffer.
- Nitrates from agriculture.
- Lawn fertilizer, chemicals and pesticides.
- Lowest cost options are chosen.
- Economic downturn and loss of funds.
- Ecosystem less of a priority.
- Economic pressures on agricultural lands – over use and fertilization contributes to poor water quality.
- Human modifications – included channelization leads to eradication of mussels and sandbar degradation.
- Poor water quality – unhealthy to swim, drink or eat fish.
- Invasive Species – salt cedars, wild parsnip (poisonous to humans).
- Invasives damage habitat for native species.
- Lack of low land flooding – decreased nutrient loading of waters.
- Lack of access to the habitats for those interested in restoration.
    - Could be better regulated/monitored.
- Lack of information/data sharing and availability.
    - Could use local experts to help gather and share data.
    - Compiled information source could be put into an online database.

**What should be fixed? How?**

- Promote and recognize economic value of natural state of the river.
- Education of people – heightening awareness of consequences, ramifications of actions, etc.
- Create a link to the river in terms of economic opportunities, including medical research (UNMC) and other educational centers of excellence; make Omaha a livable city that is attractive and promotes recreation.
- Create restrictions for development through zoning and easements.
- Educate farmers: For example, the nitrates from farm runoff have been reduced through education and coaching of farmers – this benefits water quality.
- Encourage organic farming.
- Encourage more sustainable farming practices.
- Provide more sustainable alternatives to landowners/ag producers, such as leasing land for recreation, and hunting; promote ecosystem health. Economically incent the creation of more value from the land.
- Encourage alternative methods of energy production.
- Promote and enforce natural corridor for animal movement.
- Need to stop seeing the river as a place to dump.
- Health of the community – a healthy ecosystem means healthy people.

**Opportunities – How?**

- Omaha downtown development is providing opportunity for people to learn about the river. Use concerts in the park and other entertainment and cultural events to display and/or disseminate information. Use public art – for example, sculptures of endangered species – to educate about problems.
- Utilize public activities to communicate information or show key messages.
- Recovery Program has funding.
- Because of the economic times, need to do "more with less." Government funds may not be as available as they have been.
- Public involvement.
- The plan needs to be adaptive.
- Work with counties on zoning.
- Improve collaboration with state and local stakeholders, public interests groups, general public – buy-in across a wide array of people, institutions and organizations is essential.
- Replace oxbows to increase species habitat.
- Opportunities to utilize innovative technologies.
- Look at economic viability in a more holistic approach – show how sustainability may contribute to economic viability, etc.
- Won't be close to what it once was, but can make it better in certain locations.

**Natural Resources Issues**

- Water quality.
- Aquatic habitats.
- Cottonwood forest expansion.
- Management of grasslands and prairies.
- Increased diversity of habitats, including grassland, prairies and aquatic habitats.
- Threatened and endangered species.
- All declining (threatened and endangered) species.

- Riparian habitat.
- Flood plain habitat.
- Trees.
- Grasses.
- Soil erosion is a problem for water quality.
- Invasive species (wild parsnips, salt cedar, etc.).
- Chemicals from farms, lawns impacts water quality.
- Overpopulations of certain species, e.g., deer and wild turkey.
- Floodplain prairies are in decline.
- Alternative methods of energy generation.

**What does restoration mean?**

- Restoring the flood plain, make it attractive, adapting tit to what is usable today.
- Restoration is not the best word – re-creation better fits this process.
- Tearing down the walls and barriers between the people and the river.
- Examine all possibilities for restoration, including taking down structure and reduce the number of levies.
- Be adaptive.
- Return natural processes (reduce/eliminate channelization). Remove levees.

**Trade Offs after Restoration**

- Slower river may lessen power generation in some areas and reduce cooling at power generation plants.
- Less accessible storm water runoff.
- Higher energy costs and sewage costs.
- Costs due to need to update and elongate bridges (due to wider river), and other infrastructure expenses that would be incurred.
- Costs due to need to address river-front structures that will need to be moved.
- Loss of some industrial districts.
- Less barge navigation and other socio-economic impacts that would occur if channelization were reduced/eliminated, if levees were removed, and so on.
- Less crop lands.
- Reduced landowner freedoms.

**<u>OBSERVERS' COMMENTS</u>**

- Wish the group was larger and more diverse.
- Thought the process was good.
- Everybody wants an aesthetically pleasing river.
- Should focus on:
    - What can be obtained?
    - What is socially feasible?
- Meeting was difficult to attend
    - Would be nice to have meeting in the evening.
- Timeliness of draft report:
    - The sooner the better.

**FEEDBACK ON DRAFT REPORT**

- The report seems to have captured the discussion well. I have a comment about an item under No. 5, Moving Forward: Reactions to the Purpose and Needs Statements, "The lack of low land flooding decreases nutrient loading of waters." From my perspective this lack of low land flooding decreases the productivity of the farmland that previously would periodically flood. I don't believe it decreases the nutrient loading of the waters. Remembering talk from my youth on the farm, the Missouri River bottomground was noted for its fertility, but the price for that was the occasional loss of crops and the required replanting because of flooding. By curtailing flooding of this ag land, we also disrupt the dropping of that fertile load onto the land.

  Thanks for the opportunity to participate.

- The draft report is well written and will be a part of a very important process, My comment that should be included in the final report.

  Any study of the restoration of the Missouri River is not complete without a comprehensive analysis of the consequences and management of SEDIMENTATION in the river resulting from the impoundment, regulation and channelization of the Missouri River. In many respects, this is the root cause of many of the issues being addressed, and yet nothing is contained in the report to point out the need to earnestly address this issue. Everyone is aware of that the lack of natural sediment is a major contributing cause of problems in the Mississippi River Delta, contributing to the flooding of New Orleans. Degradation causes elimination of sandbars for habitat and bank erosion below Gavins Point Dam. Aggradation causes flooding near Kansas City. Aggradation of sediment in Lewis and Clark Lake, unless transported below the dam where it belongs (where millions are now being spent to dredge and create habitat), will fill and destroy the Lake in just a few decades. Sedimentation building up in the reaches of the Missouri River above the Lake threaten municipal water supplies, caused the Town of Niobrara and the Niobrara State Park be relocated to higher ground, the condemnation of thousands of acres of farm land, the rebuilding or relocation of Highway 12 from the Santee Reservation to Verdel, Nebraska, and threaten many acres of land, homes and recreational activities in North Central Nebraska and South Dakota. Millions of dollars have been spent to fix problems as they occur, but no effort to restore the Missouri River will be responsible unless it includes a comprehensive study and solutions developed regarding sediment creation and management. This is like a little secret that is being ignored, but a sediment solution lies at the heart of the efforts to restore the River. Thanks for including me, and I look forward to continuing participation.

- In my opinion, most of the attendees had sincere concern for the health of the river and there were enough different viewpoints to make interesting discussions.

  I was the one seeking Falk's Ice Cream and got a good lead on that. Also, I was the one who quoted the words from Joni Mitchell's song "Big Yellow Taxi" on a CD. Some of the words are "Don't it always seem to go that you don't know what you've got 'till it's gone. They paved paradise and put up a parking lot."

  Thanks for the opportunity to become more knowledgeable about the Missouri River and to meet others with similar interests.

  The recent series of articles in the *Prairie Fire Newspaper* on environmental changes in the river were excellent.

**MRERP Civic Engagement Meetings Fall 2009**

**Final Report**

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# Attachment G

## Iowa Report

# Report

## MRERP Civic Engagement Meeting

## 9/18/2009

## Sioux City, IA

**Prepared by**
**Werner Institute, Creighton University**
**Public Policy Center, University of Nebraska**

# Report

**MRERP Civic Engagement Meeting**
**Sioux City, IA**
**September 18, 2009**
**Prepared by**
**Werner Institute, Creighton University**
**Public Policy Center, University of Nebraska**

## 1. Introduction

The meeting included 13 participants, primarily from Iowa but also including Nebraska and South Dakota, representing *community* organizations (e.g., Sioux City Gospel Mission), *conservation/ environmental*-related organizations (e.g., Missouri River Bank Stabilization Association), *governmental units & collaborations* (e.g., Natural Resources Conservation Service ; Siouxland Interstate Metropolitan Planning Council – SIMPCO, the third oldest multistate Council of Governments in the nation representing communities in IA, NE, & NE), *local residents* (several people identified themselves as residents), *private sector* (Big SOO Barge Terminal, Tegra Corporation), *sporting-recreational* organizations (e.g., Waterfowler), *tribal* interests (a tribe member participated, but not in an official capacity), and *university*-based outreach and extension unit (Iowa State). Many participants, not surprisingly, wore multiple hats, representing more than one interest group and/or constituency. In addition, there were five observers. See Appendix A for a list of participants and their affiliations.

## 2. Methodology

Over 50 individuals and organizations – from agriculture to environmental and conservation, from the private sector to the traditionally underserved – were informed about the civic engagement meeting. They were contacted used multiple approaches – emails, postal mail, and telephone – and asked to let others know of the meeting opportunity in what is sometimes termed "snowball" fashion. Initially, Bob Dolan and Bernie Hoyer, Iowa Dept of Natural Resources and state representatives on the Cooperating Agency Team (CAT), were asked for their recommendations and help in distributing the request for participation. They emailed the meeting info to their western IA DNR colleagues and asked them to forward any recommendations for invitees. We also asked MRRIC members for their help in identifying possible attendees. In addition, Marcia Poole, director of the Sioux City Lewis & Clark Interpretive Center Association where the Iowa meeting would be held, and Mark Monson, the president of Missouri River Historical Development, Inc. and a Woodbury County Commissioner, were asked to let people and organizations know of the meeting. See Appendix B for invitation materials and the list of invitees. (Note: Some organizational contacts are not included because we were referred to the group but were not given the name of a contact.)

The general guidelines for reaching out to individuals and organizations were:

- Community leaders.
- People with pre-established communication networks.
- Those who are interested in the Missouri River and water-related issues.
- Traditionally underserved groups/areas.

- True members of the public, without a major organizational stake in the MRERP, MRRIC or other Missouri River projects.
- No federal or state employees unless they are representing themselves, and not their agencies.
- A mix of those who see the Missouri River from fresh perspective, and those with a historical perspective of the changes in the river.

We sent to the U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution and the Cooperating Agency Team a list of various local, area, and state organizations and groups with an interest in MRERP. Invitations to participate were then sent from the Institute to these organizations and groups. Finally, a large number of faith-based organizations, businesses, community organizations, educational institutions, and so on were contacted directly by the Werner Institute staff.

The general public was also invited via a notice in the region's largest newspaper, *Sioux City Journal*. See Appendix B for a copy of the media release.

At the civic engagement event, small group and entire group activities were undertaken to allow participants to learn about MRERP issues and to provide input about their attitudes, feelings, and opinions related to MRERP. See Appendix C for an annotated agenda. An initial welcome and overview were provided by the facilitators from Creighton University and University of Nebraska (Anat Cabili, Helen Shew, and Alan Tomkins,) and U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution/MRERP representatives (Brian Manwaring and Sasha Storz). Because of the small number of participants attending the meeting, it was decided at the outset to have participants individually introduce themselves rather than talk in pairs, as originally contemplated. A MRERP overview was presented by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service representative Wayne Nelson-Stastny, and then participants rotated through discussions, in groups of three to five participants, about three value themes: social context and identity, community, and economic vitality. A facilitator was at each value theme table, and s/he remained there for the entire period of this exercise. Participants were asked to split up, so that the participants would have a chance to hear from and interact with different people across the three discussions. A report out from each theme was undertaken, primarily offered by the table facilitator, so everyone in the room would hear the highlights. Thereafter, future scenarios were discussed, after which a full group report out took place, and then participants were introduced to the MRERP draft purpose and needs statement ("Moving Forward") by Brian Manwaring (project Program Manager, U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution) and were asked to discuss the issues, and a final group report took place afterwards. Finally, final perspectives, including from the observers, were provided, and the conveners explained the next steps, including a sharing of this Report for participants' comments and clarification. In the next three sections, we provide syntheses of the input from the participants, followed by a final section of input from observers at the meeting. In addition, a more detailed listing of issues raised and values discussed are included in Appendix D.

## 3. Values

<u>Biocentric or Environmental Values</u>

Many of the participants passionately lamented the degraded state of the Missouri River (MR) that currently exists. Calls for habitat restoration were pointed and frequent. Values associated with restoration that were mentioned numerous times included improved habitats for humans and wildlife

and the intertwined values of leisure, aesthetic, economic, and community values. A restored river should balance both industrial and environmental values, suggested a participant, but also said that it was unclear whether such a balance was possible. “I want to see habitat restoration,” explained one participant, “a more natural river, a river that has increased summer flows, enhanced recreational value, more economic opportunities that come with adequate water supplies and allow safe recreation.”

Socio-Cultural Values

Participants view the Missouri River as integral and vital part of the socio-cultural, economic, recreational, and overall quality of life in the area. One participant suggested the MR was life itself, a source of water, food, and economic viability, first for the Native Americans and now for both tribal members and non-tribal members. “Water is sacred,” this participant noted. These same types of fundamental values were also noted by other participants, who mentioned the health potentials of the MR (for example, via leisure/recreation on and along the river) as well as the health threats (water quality). “The river’s trails, and its views, provide a powerful therapy,” a participant observed. Another mentioned that the ability to see the river every day creates a “sense of peace.” Another spoke of needing to get a daily “river fix.” A participant pined to “link the river with its watershed.”

Livelihood and Wealth Values

The deterioration of the river over the years has had an adverse impact on the economy of the community. In the past, the Sioux City (SC) region (commonly referred to as “Siouxland”) attracted a lot of birders, hunters, and others who contributed to recreational and tourism economies. While this has continued in neighboring areas like central Nebraska and central Missouri, these opportunities have been diminished greatly in the SC region. The wildlife quantity and diversity have fallen off considerably (although bald eagles and other species appear to be making a comeback), interfering with economic development in the recreational tourism domain.

Nonetheless, there have been attempts to capitalize on the beauty and aesthetics that remain. Participants were excited about the festivals and sports activities that take place along the MR, bringing in people who interact with one another, allowing youth to be instilled with the values participants associated with the river, and contributing to new economic opportunities and developments. Finally, several participants mentioned Sioux City’s ability to draw businesses and people due to the low utility bills that are low because of the presence of the MR.

Health, Safety, and Security Values

Several people spoke about the dangers of the river in its current state. “I want to feel safe recreating on the river in smaller craft instead of big motor boats,” observed a participant. A cleaned up river will allow its restored wetlands to be a place to introduce youth and others to the river without the danger of the current risking their safety, allowing schools to create a curriculum to teach about the region’s interrelated history, wildlife, habitat, ecosystem, and overall quality of life.

Participants expressed a strong desire to keep protected against flooding. There was flooding that desecrated a cemetery several years ago. But for the most part, flood control is working. Participants compared the Siouxland region favorably to the communities in Iowa that were devastated by floods in 2008. The participants expressed relief and gratitude that they feel they are not at risk as others are in the region.

Overview of Values

The participants viewed the MR as integral to the identity and vibrancy of Siouxland. Tribal communities in the region were all closely connected to the MR, and even today connections between the river and the native communities remain powerful. Like other communities along the MR, Sioux City's establishment and growth was tied to the water and to other transport and livelihood opportunities the river presented.

While the particulars differed, strong ties to the river were mirrored by all the participants at the meeting. It is key to the quality of life in Siouxland. Many mentioned the aesthetics and the recreation on and around the MR, features that distinguish SC and its environs from other places. Participants attributed the community's population stability in the face of declining populations in many communities across the Midwest and Great Plains to the MR, claiming it is core to economic opportunities, keeps the community vital, it prevents people from leaving, and it brings those back who temporarily leave. The river serves as a gathering place ("we're drawn to it"): Recreation, entertainment, culture, sports, education, and so on – many activities are located on or near the river. Pride in the community was evident from all the participants, and state and national recognition was simply one way of documenting from the outside what everyone felt: "Sioux City was recently nominated for the great places award," said one participant, and the reason it was nominated (actually awarded) was because of the river and the investment in making it better.[1]

> "The Missouri River is part of our identity, and it provides economic development."
>
> – Participant

Job preservation and creation was a constant thread in the conversations that took place at the meeting, whether the discussion turned to the barge terminals along the river, power plants using the river's water, hotels and other businesses relying on tourism and recreational activities, community activities, and so on. Several people mentioned it is hard to separate economics from quality of life issues. The MR creates jobs through operating the terminal (barge), water for power, wastewater treatments, hotels, tourism and recreation visitation, river boats for gambling, marinas, and fishing and hunting licenses provide revenues to the community and states. The use of the river affects other sectors not necessarily directly connected to it; there is interdependency among various sectors.

There was great concern, however, that there has been a marked decrease in economic opportunities associated with the natural resources, wildlife, recreational, and related industries, and this has had an adverse impact on many in Siouxland. The river itself is in horrible shape and there is not the diverse habitat that used to attract people from elsewhere to

> "Since 1954 [post-MR levees, etc.] what you have out there is a wasteland. There is no reason for someone in Georgia to come look at a ditch they could look at in their front yard. It has impacted businesses here. Rural communities that used to attract people for vacation and hunting are gone. Places like Desoto Bend used to have a national draw. (Many, many snow geese used to stop on their migratory path)."
>
> – Participant

[1] In 2005, SC was named one of three one of three Iowa Great Places designated by the state's Department of Cultural Affairs in its inaugural competition. *See* http://www.iowagreatplaces.gov/content/view/38/62/. *Site Selection*, a national magazine of "corporate real estate strategy and area economic development" named the tri-state area of Sioux City, IA-NE-SD to the No. 1 ranking among all U.S. metropolitan areas of less than 200,000 in population ("the nation's Top Tier-Three Metro") in 2007 and again in 2008. *See* http://www.siteselection.com/issues/2009/mar/top-metros/.

come visit the Siouxland communities for its recreational opportunities. Although several people spoke highly of "the beauty of the water and cottonwood forest, the bluffs, [and] the diversity of the scenery," others spoke about the problems created by the current habitat conditions and wetland conditions ("there is no migratory habitat in the flood plain"). Most everybody mentioned the expense it will require to remediate the situation.

Besides the natural resources/wildlife/recreation industry, another industry that has been adversely impacted is the barge business. It has reduced dramatically at the Big Sioux Terminal. Said one of the two participants who make their livelihood from the barge industry: "Now the river is lower, it is not economical to transport via the river. You can't load as much onto the barge, and it still costs the same to fuel." The last commercial barge to the Big Sioux Terminal was five years ago. The barges saved a lot of freight shipping monies, not only directly but also because their competition assured the railroad's rates were lower, farmers' costs (input and output) were lower, and thus consumers' costs were lower. This is not the case anymore.

**4. Future Visioning/Scenarios**

At the conclusion of the restoration activities, participant hoped the MR will no longer be a ditch, but rather will be a vibrant, multi-use, ecologically-stable, sustainable river and river-region again. The participants agreed (some reluctantly) that although the MR will not again be a meandering river, the new ecosystem realities that will exist will allow Siouxland to be an outstanding place to visit and live. There was confidence that there could be some degree of restoration of native hydrology and habitat: "To restore it to the way it was is impossible. [Nevertheless, there are] a lot of mitigation opportunities that would improve upon the choices that have been made in the past."

The hope expressed by the participants was that the MR would be a family friendly, safe river that included the today's traditions but with a new look. The consequence would be that SC would be a stronger city where the quality of life attracts people.

The river will be SC's focal point. One participant equated the potential for what could take place in SC is similar to what has happened in San Antonio's River Walk area, with the riverfront in SC becoming home to food, lodging, recreational, cultural, and educational activities, attracting not only many residents but also many tourists. There were other hopes from participants for business return in the barge transportation and the recreational-tourist industries. The outcome of the restoration activities will be a river *and* community that can balance and integrate business and environmental needs.

**5. Moving Forward: Reactions to the Purpose and Needs Statements**

What will happen if the Missouri River is not restored? Participants agreed that there will be less diversity of species, diminishing diversification of species, deeper channels, dry tributaries, and continuing river degradation that will affect irrigation and farm land, adversely impact other areas (e.g., highway system and bridges), and decrease the water supply. It is impossible to predict all the negative effects of lack of restoration, but the future is not bright without a successful restoration project.

The same entities leading the restoration efforts are the same entities that could be a major barrier to success. Several participants expressed concerns about the credibility of the science (not peer reviewed) that has been used by USACE and FWS to justify the Missouri River decisions to this point. When these shortcomings were brought to light, the government's actions did not change. The past

generates a mistrust of federal governmental agencies. Indeed, there was fear that the meeting and its outcomes will be used to maintain the status quo. Participants challenged that if USACE and FWS won't recognize science that doesn't support their thinking, can they be trusted to carry out the project?

**6. Other Observations**

The observers were very complimentary to the participants, praising them for their hard work during the day, expressing gratitude for the viewpoints and input they heard in the meeting. Both observers commented on the enormity and complexity of the restoration process, and mentioned the cooperation that will need to take place among many stakeholders if the restoration project is going to be successful.

**Appendices**

Appendix A: Participants and Observers

Appendix B:  Invitations

Appendix C: Agenda

Appendix D: Details of Participants' Perspectives

## Appendix A
## Participants and Observers

Marilyn Charging
Educational Equity Office
SC Public Schools
1221 Pierce Street
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712 279 6075
chargim@siouxcityschools.org

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Natural Resources Conservation Service
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Vernon Meyer
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Dakota City, NE 68731
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Jim Peterson
Missouri River Bank Stabilization Association
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Clyde Popham
c/o Vernon Meyer
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Bill Smith,
Region 5 Waterfowler
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FHD101@aol.com

Brian Soenen
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Sioux City, IA 51104
712-898-1923
s00nz@hotmail.com

**Observers**:
Bill Beacom, MRRIC
Paul Lepisto, Izzak Walton League, MRRIC
Kevin Knepper, Big SOO Barge Terminal, MRRIC
Jim Redmond, Sierra Club, MRRIC
Skip Meisner, MRRIC

Appendix B
Invitations

## Iowa Missouri River Public Participation Meeting
## Invitees and Anticipated Attendees

| Group/ Agency/ Perspective | Contact Name | Notes | Attending |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Agriculture** | | | |
| County Soil and Water Conservation Districts | No Name Specified | Fremont, Harrison, Mills, Monona, Plymouth, Pottawattamie and Woodbury counties (John Askew attending Omaha meeting) | |
| **Natural Resources Conservation Service** | **Sheila K. Cox** | | **Yes** |
| Iowa Farm Bureau Federation | Barb Lykins Rick Robinson | | |
| Woodbury County Farm Bureau | Beth McGrath | | |
| Iowa Soybean Association | | | |
| Iowa Corn Growers Assn | M. Larson-Poldberg | | |
| AGREN, Inc. | Tom & Stan Buman | | |
| **Business/ Chamber of Commerce/ City Planning** | | | |
| **Tegra Corporation** | **Doug Palmer** | | **Yes** |
| **Big SOO Barge Terminal** | **Jim Palmer** | | **Yes** |
| William McLarty | | | |
| Economic Development Director | Daniel McNamara | | |
| North Sioux City Economic Dev Corp | Kory Menken | | |
| Director of Rural Economic Development Woodbury County | Robert Marqusee | | |
| **Dakota City, NE City Manager** | **Bob Peters** | | **Yes** |
| Sioux City Chamber of Commerce | No one specified | | |
| Sioux City Public Manager | No one specified | | |
| **SIMPCO** | **Jane Gilbert** | **Siouxland Planning Council** | **Yes** |
| City of Moville, IA | No one specified | | |
| Mayor of Onawa, IA | No one specified | | |
| Sioux City Downtown Rotary | Lynn Barteck | | |
| Sioux City Public Library | No one specified | Wilbur Aalfs, Morningside, Perry Creek and South Sioux branches | |
| Bass Pro Shop, Council Bluffs, IA | No one specified | | |
| Scheels Sporting Goods, Sioux City, IA | Dennis [last name unknown] | Can't come as taking local schools out on river excursion at Ponca State Park | |
| Monona County Tourism | K.C. Moore | | |

**Diverse Viewpoints/ Traditionally Underserved/ Advocacy Groups**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Sioux City Gospel Mission** | **Vernon Miller** | | **Yes** |
| **Sioux City Gospel Mission** | **Clyde Popham** | | **Yes** |
| **Educational Equity Office** | **Marilyn Charging** | | **Yes** |
| Sioux City Human Rights Commission | Karen Mackey | | |
| Four Directions Community Center | Frank LaMere | | |
| Faith community | Rev Tom Lo Van | | |
| Mt Zion Baptist Church | Rev Floyd Brown | | |
| Pho Mom Buddhist Temple | XX | | |
| Mosque of Sioux City | Saleh Mohamed | | |
| Sioux City NAACP | No one specified | | |
| Siouxland Committee for Handicapped | No one specified | | |
| Mary Treglia Community House | No one specified | | |
| Goldenrod Hill Family Service & Senior Center | No one specified | | |
| Siouxland Senior Center AARP | No one specified | | |

**Education/ Historical**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Missouri River Historical Development | Mark Monson | | |
| Horizons Programs Iowa State U | Ruth Freeman | | |
| Iowa State U Sioux City Alumni Group | Anne Shaner | | |
| Briar Cliff College | Biology Dept | | |
| Morningside College | Biology Dept | | |
| Iowa Western Technical Community College | R. Tondreau | | |
| Northeast Community College | P. Miller | | |
| University of South Dakota, Vermillion | T. Cowman | | |
| State Historical Society of Iowa | K.C. Hummel | Western Historic Trails Center | |
| Iowa State University | Alan Ladd | Regional Extension Education Director | *Coming to Omaha meeting* |
| Woodbury County Extension | Sheri McGill | | Yes |

**Energy/Utilities**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| American Water Works Association | No Name Specified | | |
| Nebraska Public Power District | Keith Ellis<br>Mark Miller | | |

**Government Local and State**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Lower Niobrara Natural Resource District | Dwane Filsinger | Registered but had to cancel on 9/17 | Unable to attend |
| Iowa County Conservation Boards | No Name Specified | Fremont, Harrison, Mills, Monona, Plymouth, Pottawattamie and Woodbury | |
| Iowa Landowner Incentive Program | No Name Specified | Kelly Smith | |

**Environmental and Conservation**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Project Aware** | **Brain Soenen** | | **Yes** |
| Hitchcock Nature Center Honey Creek | Tina Popson | Will distribute | |
| Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center, Sioux City | Dawn Snyder | Will distribute | |
| Izaak Walton Club | Wade Brown | | |
| Sioux Ikettes | Pegge Johnson | | |
| Friends of Lake Manawa | No Name Specified | | |
| Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation | A Robinson | | |
| Loess Hills Audubon Society | Jerry Probst | | |
| Loess Hills Alliance | T Bruning | | |
| IOWATER coordinator | M. Skopec | Will distribute to volunteers | |
| Trees Forever - Iowa | M. Borchart | Will distribute to NW Iowa region | |
| Sioux Rivers Resource Conservation and Development Council | L. Bindner | | |
| Iowa Leopold Education Project | Chris Lee | | |
| **Missouri River Technical Group** | **Donald Jorgensen** | | **Yes** |
| **Missouri River Bank Stabilization** | **Jim Peterson** | **Vermillion, South Dakota** | **Yes** |

**Tribes**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| St. Paul's Indian Mission | Rev Anne Scissons | | |
| Native American Child Care Center | Beach Husk | | |
| American Indian Council | No Name Specified | | |
| Winnebago TANF | No Name Specified | | |
| Ponca Tribe of Nebraska | No Name Specified | | |

**Recreation/ Hunting/ Fishing**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Waterfowl Assoc of Iowa** | **Bill Smith** | | **Yes** |
| Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever | John Lindquist | Distributed to volunteers in western Iowa | |
| NE Nebraska Ducks Unlimited | Matt Aitken | | |
| Siouxland Ducks Unlimited | Rick Schneider | | |

**Observers**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Paul Lepisto** | **MRRIC** | **Izzak Walton League** | **Yes** |
| **Bill Beacom** | **MRRIC** | | **Yes** |
| **Kevin Knepper** | **MRRIC** | **Big SOO Barge Terminal** | **Yes** |
| **Donald "Skip" Meisner** | **MRRIC** | **Meisner Management Services LLC** | **Yes** |
| **Jim Redmond** | **MRRIC** | **Sierra Club** | **Yes** |
| *David Sieck* | *MRRIC* | *Iowa Corn Growers Assoc* | *Omaha Mtg.* |
| Al Sturgeon | MRRIC | Unable to attend –flying to Great Falls on 9/18 | No |

**Email Solicitation Example**

**From:** Shew, Helen B.
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 09, 2009 9:43 AM
**To:** [Recipient]
**Subject:** meetings on the Missouri
**Attachments:** Omaha Location River Flyer.pdf; Sioux City River flyer.pdf

Hello, I'm writing to ask your help in identifying possible attendees to invite to the public meeting in either **Omaha on September 17 or Sioux City on September 18th.** Can you forward my message below to any people you think would have interest? Thanks for any help you can give.

These meetings will explore many areas of interest including agriculture, history, land use, environment and family recreation. Please feel free to pass this information on to anyone you think might have interest in your area.

The Werner Institute Public Issues Collaboration project at Creighton University is facilitating invited meetings to gain public input from citizens in Iowa and Nebraska regarding the Missouri River, specifically the Missouri River Ecosystem Restoration Plan (MRERP). This is a new basin wide biological study to determine how the river will be managed in the future to suit both the natural resources as well as human needs in the basin. Because we are hoping to hear from true members of the public at the meeting, without a major organizational stake in Missouri River projects.

The summary of the discussions will be provided to the US Army Corps of Engineers as the agency considers future river restoration.

It will be a one day meeting (10am-4:00pm). People can attend either meeting Omaha, Thursday, September 17 or Sioux City, Friday, September 18th - but **pre-registration is required.** Please ask those interested to contact me for further information.

Thank you,

Helen Shew

Helen Shew
CHPE
Creighton University
2500 California Plaza
Omaha, NE 68178

phone 402 280 2646
fax 402 280 5735

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
NOTICE OF FOCUS GROUP MEETING

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), in partnership with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), is initiating a collaborative long-term study authorized by the Water Resources Development Act of 2007. The name of this study is the Missouri River Ecosystem Restoration Plan and Environmental Impact Statement (MRERP EIS). The result will be a fully integrated plan and environmental impact statement (EIS), prepared following National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and USACE planning guidance. Once completed, the MRERP will result in a policy/programmatic-level plan that will determine and describe high-level priorities and criteria for projects that address mitigation, recovery, and restoration of the Missouri River.

The USACE will hold focus group meetings for the MRERP EIS in locations throughout the Missouri River Basin to describe the project and the planning process, and to solicit input on the project scope, purpose and need, issues, and other related matters.

One of the focus group meetings will be held on September 18, 2009 from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. in Sioux City, Iowa. This focus group meeting will include a small group of active participants accompanied by group of observers. This focus group activity is an exercise to trigger both active participants and observers to consider key scoping elements and hear different viewpoints. Participants for the focus groups will be identified beforehand and will reflect a diverse range of communities and interests in the basin. This focus group meeting is also open to observers. Although observers will not actively participate in the exercise, they will have an opportunity to provide input on the content and process they observed. Obtaining input from active participants as well as observers is a central purpose of these meetings. Space is limited. To reserve your space as an observer or for additional information about this focus group meeting, please send an e-mail to hshew@creighton.edu or (402) 280-2646 by September 11, 2009.

Information pertaining to scoping and the overall project can be found on the web at www.mrerp.org. Written comments for scoping will be accepted until December 1, 2009.

Questions and comments specific to the project and EIS should be addressed to:

Jennifer Switzer
Project Manager
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
601 E. 12th Street
Kansas City, MO 64106

Email Address to Submit Comments: comments@mrerp.org

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# *WHAT DO YOU THINK about the future of the Missouri River?*

A Day of Discussion for Iowa and Nebraska

What does the river mean to you? Creighton University's Werner Institute Public Issues Collaboration wants to hear from you regarding the Missouri River, specifically the Ecosystem Restoration Plan, a new basin wide study to determine how the river will be managed in the future to suit natural resources as well as human needs. We're planning a day of public discussion, deliberation and input from Iowa and Nebraska residents. The summary of the discussions will be provided to the US Army Corps of Engineers as the agency considers future river restoration.

This is an invited meeting for members of the public from Nebraska and Iowa. Space is limited. Pre-registration is required and you must be able to attend the meeting for the entire day.

WHEN:
Friday, September 18, 2009 from 10:00am to 4:00pm

Sign in will begin at 9:30am

WHERE:
The Sioux City Lewis & Clark Interpretive Center
900 Larsen Park Road
From the south or north take Interstate 29 to Exit 149 (Hamilton Boulevard).

FREE: There is no fee to attend. We will provide lunch. Unfortunately, we are unable to provide day-care services.

REGISTRATION Required:
To register by email: hshew@creighton.edu
To register by phone: 1-402-280-2646

For more information on the project see www.moriverrecovery.org/mrrp

Appendix C
Agenda

**Nebraska MRERP Civic Engagement Meeting Agenda**

10:00- 10:30 Welcome and Introductions
Welcome
Review of purpose of meeting including civic engagement white sheet
Proposed ground rules, clarify roles of facilitators and records & what happens to info
Review and explain agenda pieces
Introductions: Talk in pairs about the role the Missouri River plays in their lives
Then introduce self and something about what they had just shared

10:30- 11:15 Missouri River Ecosystem Restoration Plan Presentation
Includes 15 minutes of Questions and Answers from participants

11:15 Stretch break

11:15- 11:30 Explanation of Values Process
Explain World Café Process
Explore reflection questions around three themes:
Social context and identity
Community
Economic Vitality

11:30- Noon First round of World Café

Noon- 12:30 Lunch Break

12:30- 1:30 World Café continued, including large group report back

1:30- 2:30 Future Scenarios
Participants move to different table top groups

- Imagine it is 2029: Describe a future in which the restoration of the Missouri River ecosystem has been completed.
- What does that future look like? How is the ecosystem different? What do communities along the river do differently? What is the single biggest barrier that had to be overcome and how was that accomplished?
- Given what you have heard, what are three values and three big ideas you want to identify, along with one or two unique ideas worth considering?

2:30-3:30 Moving Forward
Individuals are given copies of draft purpose and needs statement

- What are the strengths in each of the statements?
- What are the concerns you might have about each of the statements?

3:30- 4:00 Closing
Input from observers/next steps/clarify reporting process including participants review

Appendix D
Details of Participants' Perspectives

**SOCIAL CONTEXT AND IDENTITY**

**What is your connection to the Missouri River?**

- One participant grew up on the river in North Dakota where her family life, history, and tribal culture centered on and around the river. There are things linked to the river that can't be found anywhere else, she said. Examples included gathering June berries, ice fishing, and hunting. "The river is a place that is part of my life- it's a gathering place for my family." Tribal culture is dependent on the river.
    - "There are lots of tribal stories that take place around the river."
- One participant noted, "I'm a conservationist and water fowler, I have been here as long as they [the birds] have. I am interested in wetlands' restoration." He noted that across the country, water-related nature and recreation activities and related tourism is a multibillion dollar industry, and there are economic opportunities if conservation were a priority. "It could be of benefit."
- A participant explained the University's extension program has a master conservationist program. "Our job is to help find ways to volunteer in the community and bring volunteers."
- Said one participant, "Having lived around Sioux City for a long time, it's a very valuable asset to the area in terms of quality of life and healthy environment. " He also noted that protecting our environment is really important and that a healthy environment means appreciating the environment.
- Recreation and drinking water.
- Swimming and boating.
- A participant spoke about using the river for boating when he was younger. He traveled the river, "from one end to the other." He has a place on the river. He laments the loss of the cottonwood forests.
- "I have a home on the river."
- One participant mentioned he came back to the family [barge] business. Without the river and the business on the river, he would not be back in the area. He returned to SC after leaving for college. The MR is something that provides jobs to the community, keeps people from leaving and allows them to come back if they go.

**COMMUNITY**

**What does the MO River mean to your community?**

- Themes: Economics and recreation (and the profits from recreational activities). The river is a quality of life definer for Sioux City.
    - Economic development, tourism, and people enjoying recreating.
    - Boating has become prominent.
- Valuable asset to the Sioux City area. Quality of life, healthy environment in terms of appreciating and caring for the environment.
    - Water is central to economic development in community.
    - The river is life sustaining.
    - Diversity of scenery.
    - Abundant wildlife.
- River is underappreciated – people don't understand its importance.

    - "We used to have the largest livestock industry and largest covered livestock area in the country. Brought a lot of people, along with WWII. The facility is gone, unfortunately, but it helped create this community."
    - Unique resource for the community.
- Increased erosion is a real problem.
- Tribal community has lost its history from an educational perspective. The river is central to its history.
- The river holds tribal value as a means to carry on the traditions. The ecosystem provides plants such as the June berries and herbs for healing.
    - Not a lot of development at some places around the river, so it is more "natural" in these locations.
- Resource for education and training people in conservation practices for their communities.
- Recreation and aesthetics:
    - For recreation value the river has limited appeal and use as it currently is. Doesn't have a diverse habitat.
    - Enjoy the peace and quiet along the river. Enjoy watching changes along the river. "I consider myself lucky that I knew the river before channelization."
    - The beauty of the water and cottonwood forest, the bluffs, the diversity of the scenery. The amount of wildlife is incredible – esp. bald eagles.
    - Bird watching, botanists, improved native species and improved participation in all activities- education, hunting, recreation.
- Economic benefits.
    - Economic development – the Lewis & Clark celebration was a plus that highlighted the history and allowed that history to be shared with the young people. Oral history projects and written history provides young people a basis for skills to deal with the future.
    - Marginal benefits, at best, considering current habitat conditions and wetland conditions. Wetlands are affected by water levels in the fall time. If peak flows in the fall are low, there is no migratory habitat in the flood plain. It's very expensive to remediate.
    - The barge business has been about 75% of business at the Big Sioux Terminal. "Now the river is lower so it's not so economical. You can't load as much and it still costs the same to fuel." The last commercial barge to Big Sioux was 5 years ago.
    - The barges saved a lot of freight shipping monies, not only directly but also because their competition assured the railroad's rates were lower.
- The river holds tribal value as a means to carry on the traditions. The ecosystem provides plants such as the June berries and herbs for healing.
- Flood control. Nice that Sioux City is no longer a swimming pool in the summer time.
- National issue.
    - "Initiatives for environmental stuff on the Gulf Coast- they start here with agriculture run-off."
    - "I think nobody realizes that the MO River plays such a big part. In NY and CA, they know there's a big river here. But the think it must be the Mississippi because that's the one that's fun to spell. I think because of the section 108 it's going to become a national issue. Because the industry that take advantage of shipping on the river, it will affect economics. Culturally it's a mental backwater but it's poised to be thrown onto the main stage by politics. "

    - "Sioux City was recently nominated for the great places award and building up the river was part of that. Driven interest in things like trails and retails."
    - "Value of land is unbelievable for recreation and homes. River has enhanced community property values."

**How does the MO River affect your community's quality of life?**

- People identify Sioux City with the river. It separates it from other places. They'll comment on the beauty of it.
    - It has helped the community's population to increase. Keeps the community vital, brings people back.
- The river is life sustaining.
- The recreational value for a significant number of the households who use the river.
    - Escape to beautiful natural areas. Cabin, eagles nest. It's great to see the eagles surviving and coming back. Valuable to see wildlife and feel peaceful.
    - Fishing, even people outside of the area. It draws people to the area
    - The trail system along the river is very pleasant, they're being used. It affects quality of life. Integral.
    - They used to have boats you could pay to go up and down the river on. I would like to see more of that kind of thing happening.
    - When you get out of the town, you feel like you're back in Tom Sawyer days. When you're in the city, you want to see the city.
    - The river can be used to combat "Nature Deficit Disorder." Need to reconnect kids to the river (kids and family are important).
- Wetland and water fowl, although it is currently only minimally satisfying especially regarding migratory water fowl.
- Water quality is important to people, wildlife and industry.
- Flood control – don't have to worry about Sioux City flooding like Cedar Rapids did last summer.
- Water is central to economic development in community.
- Economic needs of the river as a major water supply, body of water to carry barge traffic and provide water for utilities. Rural electric coops get 25-70% of their electricity from hydropower.
- Sioux City festivals on the riverfront bring people into contact with one another and the river.
- The history of destruction- mucking out flooded homes and businesses.
- A lot of homes are being built north of Sioux City, and some south.
- There are fears about the river that create barriers:
    - The currents are fast.
    - The water quality is poor.
    - Floods are a concern.
- There are needs that are not being met:
    - River flows: Need for safety to recreate on the river in a self-powered craft. Currently area is suited only to large motorboats.
    - Habitat: MR has limited value in current state. It doesn't have the habitat to support diversity.
    - Stop dumping things in the river!

**How has the MO River shaped the culture of the community?**

- There's a love affair with the river.
- It is central to the area's IDENTITY- the MR is used in all the literature about SC.

    - "No matter where you come from, you can relate to the water. Everyone can come. If people are so segregated that there's not communication, people stay separate."
- History.
    - War Eagle monument.
    - Relationship between natives and frontier people. Everyone is a Lewis and Clark fan in some way.
    - "You can't forget the past, or you won't know how to navigate the future."
- It's a gathering place. "We're drawn to it."
    - Rivercade festival.
    - Artsplash on Labor Day weekend.
    - A lot of events take place near or around it- there is a pavilion on the MR, and sports (softball and soccer) fields.
    - The Interpretive Center.
    - Trails.
    - Hotels and restaurants along the river.
    - Garden shop.
- There are numerous opportunities to engage people through river cleanup and education.
- The MR contributes to a focus on recreation. For example, in Sergeant Bluff most people have boats they take out on the river.
- Several thousand campers in campgrounds in the summer.
- Said one participant: "I've lived here almost all my life. We've got a cabin on the river's edge. The river has changed a great deal over the years, the water doesn't come up to the edge anymore. Navigation, boating, waterskiing important and the water quantity and quality are different now: We can't do those things so easily."
- Aesthetics:
    - The view of the river when driving to work is one of the highlights of my day.
    - "I have to have a "river fix" everyday."
    - Serenity living on this "live" river.
    - Peace and quiet.
- 4H program called "shooting sports" teaches youth about archery and guns, everything that ties into hunting in the future (also a competitive sport). Lots of the volunteers come from the ranks of waterfowl hunters.
- Big Sioux is most northern barging. The navigation slough from Big Sioux north supports recreational boating.

**How might the MO River shape the community culture in the future?**

- It's important to reconnect communities to the river.
    - People/kids don't experience nature.
    - Reconnect youth with the outdoors – schools create curriculum, such as Iowa Core Curriculum, through IOWATER program. Would benefit the state of Iowa to create a curriculum around the river.
- It is important to reframe the views of people to see the river as a resource, not as a liability.
- Economic value. This area could be similar to Mound City, MO and the Niobrara River area in NE. True impacts of waterfowl on the local economy can be measured in part through Mound City's and the Niobrara region's income from snow geese and other waterfowl tourism and hunting. Same for NE in for the Sandhills Cranes along the Platte River in NE. In areas where the river is so altered such as SC there is no economic tourism benefit.
    - Need to improve conditions for migratory habitat.

        - Up until 5 yrs ago, there was no restoration. Then a little money from NAWFA was invested. Need more of that kind of investment.
    - Need to keep river clean.
    - Need to link the river with its watershed.
- It could shape the community similar to how San Antonio's River Walk has shaped that city in Texas. Sioux City has a lot of potential but it's not going forward. Need a reason to come to the river and need economic development to draw people to the area.
- River can be better utilized, using it for business generation.
    - B&Bs, hotels, recreation, fishing, bike trails.
- Need for habitat restoration conducive to migratory species are not currently being met. There's been improvement in the past 5 years but still a long way to go. Let the river become a more natural state to correct itself.
- Need to address summer flows such that need for drinking water and water for power plants are met. A drought creates tension between the north and south river in terms of varying needs.
    - The river flow also affects recreation.
- Creative approach to expanding the use of the river – a bike trail from Sioux City to Omaha.
- Like what's been done in Missouri with navigation on one side and conservation on the other… a good model for MR.
- Restored wetlands provided a safe educational and recreational opportunity without the risk of the swift current present in the river.
- Pay attention to creating a natural environment. Bank stabilization can now look like a natural river – soft stabilization.

**ECONOMIC VITALITY**

**What does the Missouri River mean to your community/state's economic vitality, diversity and sustainability?**

- Hard to separate economics from quality of life.
    - Many aspects, from drinking water to identity to recreation.
    - Interdependent with other domains, including farmers (irrigation), drinking water (about 60% of SC's drinking water), diluting waste water, recreation-based economy and activities (e.g., boating, waterfowler community, conservation, hunting, tourism).
    - Contributes to culture and livelihood through festivals.
    - Impacts land availability and land values.
    - Riverboat gambling (there are three gambling river boats in the area of Sioux City).
    - Industrial use and power plants.
    - Oil development (uses water).
        - Planned oil refinery.
        - A member of a Native American tribe mentioned that her tribe produces oil from parts of its reserve, and uses the river's water to sustain the oil production process.
    - All in all, an integral part of community.
- River recreation is important – draws a lot of people to the area.
    - Boating, canoeing, power boating, kayaking.
    - Fishing.
    - Camping.
- There are considerable recreation sites (500) within the 10/15 mile stretch along the river, in this "controlled" environment. These sites are mostly for camping and picnicking, as the river is

too fast for smaller boats. People do boat and swim, but the river is very fast through this area, which creates safety considerations.

- River provides an opportunity for photography of the resource/lands/views.
- There was once a rich heritage here with the habitat that the river provided. With the channelization and scouring of the river, wetlands, backwaters, migratory bird habitat has disappeared. This represents millions of dollars of lost value in terms of business generated by recreationists and hunters to the region. There is lost value of interstate commerce. "It is a bathtub with the drain missing." People would come here if conditions would change.
- With increased quantity and quality of habitat, there will be more recreation (i.e., hunting), that will increase conservation revenues to the state.
- Economic, recreational tourism and livelihood that draws from people within the state and outside IA and the region.
    - Fishing and hunting revenues.
- Farmers use the river for irrigation for their crops—in NE and SD mostly. Farmers have shifted from flood irrigation to pivot irrigation to conserve water.
- The river provides greater valued-crops through irrigation.
- Farming with irrigation is very important to property values and ways of life.
- Agriculture activities are important to the community.
- Without use of river for navigation, rates would increase, affecting costs of fertilizer and farmers costs, and increasing prices crops.
- Along with rails, MR is used for shipping products and bulk materials.
- Water supply needed for refinery.
- There are four coal fire power plants just south of towns that use river water for cooling. Without use of this water, there is no other way to cool, so the plants would need to curtail their power generation.
- As industry comes to the area, need clean water for drinking and industrial purposes.
- Indirect as well as direct effects:
    - Jobs.
    - Reasonable utilities' rates.
    - Economic Development.
- Has it changed?
    - "I grew up on the Mississippi. Historically, if you look back, people actually hunted waterfowl and shipped them to meat markets. People came here to recreate because of pristine nature. Since 1954 [post-MR levees, etc.] what you have out there is a wasteland. There is no reason for someone in Georgia to come look at a ditch they could look at in their front yard. It has impacted businesses here. Rural communities that used to attract people for vacation and hunting are gone. Places like Desoto Bend used to have a national draw. (Many, many snow geese used to stop on their migratory path). The declines match with changes in FWS management plans. Also adversely impacting habitat is the focus (and funds) on the Platte River. The MR is missing the necessary investment. The Sandhill Cranes on the Platte River draw people there, but the draw to MR birds is now gone. "
    - "Our relationship to the MR has changed dramatically over the last 50 years. Before the interstate and clean water legislation, the river was just sewage disposal for the town and industry (esp. meat packing). The beautiful riverfront [where the meeting took place] used to just be dirt. We do a festival called the Rivercade here. Over the last 15 years we've really gotten back in touch with the river. Now we have trails, paths, the

Anderson dance pavilion, and so on. In the recent past, there has been a big reconnection to the MR. It is becoming a focal point whereas it used to be something that was just ignored. I see that trend continuing. The river and riverfront is becoming a greater and greater factor for business too. "

- "The MR is a resource we have, a reason that people choose to live in the community. Sioux City was second choice for Sieman's wind turbine factory site location. What they did in the 40s, they had no idea what it would do now. They were trying to prevent flooding. That, and transportation was their compelling reason."

**What does the Missouri River mean to your own economic vitality?**

- Water supply fed by deep wells, recharged by the river.
- Land and property values have increased substantially driven by River amenities. "Forty years ago, I bought my land for $500, now it is worth $330,000."
- A member of the water fowler community mentioned the importance of improved habitat on the floodplain to increase conservation revenues, recreational activities, hunting, etc.
- Serves as the location for a campsite that a participant operates.
- One person mentioned that he created slide shows that present the river's history and present times. He presents the show to various groups and depending on the circumstances, he sometimes collects fees and sometimes not.
- River provides the navigation business. Personally for participants, and also employs others in the community.
    - There has been an 8 year drought, and the flows have not been available for navigation to occur. As a result, rail rates have increased 25 to 40%. With lower water levels, barges cannot load on as many heavy items, and so the cost per ton increases. The rail transport companies increase their rates to be competitive. This affects farmers input costs, which in turn increases costs to other farmers and consumers.
    - Shipping dry bulk materials through the terminal – can also ship by rail.
- Farming.
- Tribal matters:
    - The three affiliated tribes are using river water for oil development in the drilling process.
    - With the river meandering and shifting course, there are issues with land ownership.
    - When the levels of the reservoirs drop really low or the river shifts, a cemetery and sacred burial grounds were uncovered. This is a tribal concern.
    - The River provides cultural, sense of place, and peaceful setting.
- Some people mentioned that they don't think the river impacted their personal economic vitality while others mentioned that it may affect them indirectly in ways they cannot predict (some ideas mentioned were the cost of farmers produces, utility bills, etc.).
- River provides a quality of life lifestyle.

**How would your community be economically impacted without the use of the Missouri River?**

- Without the use of the river, there will be increased costs of water supply, increased cost of utilities (water and electricity), decreased land value, decreased revenues for tourism, decreased interstate tourism revenues, and decreased economic development.
    - The "butterfly" effect.
- River provides for businesses and livelihoods, tourism, and also provides indirect effects.
- There is greater tourism north of here where the river is more natural.

- There is a proposed Hyperion Resources oil refinery located across the border in South Dakota. The refinery will pull river water out for its cooling purposes.
- Without the use of the MR, water and electricity bills would increase. In this area utility costs are so low to attract businesses. These rates may increase. This region wouldn't be as competitive to bring in industry to the area.
- Would not have cheap power without hydropower and coal fired power plants.
- Transportation of goods would increase.
- So many things are tied to the river – Sioux City would not be here but for the MR.
- Many use the river for their water (via municipalities, via wells). Reduced water availability increases costs.
- If we didn't have irrigation, there might be more access to the river and water.

**FUTURE VISIONING/SCENARIOS**

**What is your vision for a restored MO River in 30 to 50 years? What conditions and features would be present?**

- Whatever it is, it should be a long-term vision tempered by realism.
- From current "ditch" back to former "river."
    - If restoration goes ahead, might be improved 50%. That means going from a ditch to a river.
    - With side chutes, we still have a ditch. Need to mimic natural system to reestablish river for ecosystem services.
    - Focus on the watershed as a whole.
    - Focus on the processes to restore the natural systems: filtration, water clarification.
    - How can we work with this existing modified system to interject natural systems into the current unnatural system?
    - Goal: Clean water!
- Restoring native hydrology and habitat.
    - Need to include the tributaries.
    - "It'd be nice to see all the species of fish restored, and having our kids/grandkids know what the 51 fishes are, what the juneberries are, what hurdles it took to bring them there – an appreciation."
    - Return of waterfowl, hunting, etc.
    - Aesthetic, economic, recreation and leisure impacts.
    - Goals: Water returns to clean status. Excellent quality and sufficient quantity. Restore wetlands. Sustainable habitat. Diversity of species returns. Ample opportunities for birding, hunting.
- Both of the above will have impact on region's economy, from tourism to new residents to new market opportunities.
    - This area is really untapped for tourism. People want quality of life they can't find in the big cities. With water issues elsewhere (like southwest part of the US), people might be willing to relocate to this are?
    - Would it be possible to sell our water elsewhere? For example, to Colorado? Climate change may be an opportunity for people in this region. There are already things to build on.
    - Opportunities in renewable and alternative fuel sources.

**Underlying assumptions regarding the vision:**

- Greater public participation in issues and decision making regarding the MR.

- Deeper appreciation of the river by the public.
    - Sustain the traditions that we value now.
    - River more of a focal point.
    - Community as a whole will have a connection with the river and make the necessary investments to preserve and maintain it.
    - Increase attention to the environment and what it means.
- The MR will no longer be the meandering river it once was. But it can be a viable, multiple use river again.
- Greater access:
    - People without means (poorer populations) can use and enjoy river.
    - Easy public access (general).
- More river-based tourism on Tribal lands.
- A more populated area.
- More river connectivity with the watershed.
- Safer river and safe being around river.
- Improved water quality.
    - "We have to be able to drink that water and use it. That will impact communities everywhere. We should be able to have clean water out of the tap."
- Sufficient water quantity.
    - Having enough water to sustain people who are living here 30 yrs from now.
- Diversity on landscape.
- Various types of recreation.
- Different types of energy sources, such as wind energy.
    - Different types of recreation going on, different types of energy sources being used- maybe no gasoline or oil.
- "Technology" will help to change the landscape.
    - Technology and where it goes is going to be vital. Power plants that need the river won't be able to get the water they need to operate.
- Would like the river to support navigation in this region.
    - Navigation can be a green way of moving goods. It has the lowest carbon footprint, and would remove tonnage off of highway system.
- The river (trails, views) provide a powerful therapy for people.

**Barriers that were identified regarding the vision were**:

- Observed one participant: "To restore it to the way it was is impossible. I think there's a lot of mitigation opportunities that would improve upon the choices that have been made in the past."
    - Creating side chutes on banks, with restoration on one side.
    - Feed the wetlands.
    - Create slack water.
    - Could address restoration of MO River and the tributaries would still be an issue. The damage is coming in from outside sources. The lack of investment in the tributaries is a barrier.
- "Summer flows, historically called navigational flows- also provide adequate drinking water and power water. Big battle between the North and South states. They want it up there for recreation. It was a big problem during the drought."
- Politics and policies.

    - The federal government is subsidizing industries that are polluting and degrading the environment, and thereafter government has to pay to fix it. The public ends up "paying on both sides." In other words, "some of the biggest commodities that impact water quality are some of the most subsidized. You're subsidizing a commodity that degrades the resource that you're also trying to put money in to protect (for example, ethanol, crop commodities). Money drives everything, it will drive how the landscape winds up."
    - Impact of farm bill on conservation.
- "Tribal water rights are very important to us and our Sovereignty. This is driving politics in this area. "
- Structures are barriers – "taking those lakes and dams out of SD and ND will never happen." There is too much sediment in the dams —one option is to pipe it over the dam (they are doing this in Louisiana).
- Reservoirs.

**How will the ecosystem be different?**

- Restoration won't just be bank to bank. The effects will go bluff to bluff.
- Interconnection of natural resources and human environment.
    - Interconnected watershed systems affecting habitat, wetlands, etc.
- Restoring wetlands away from river to improve/rejuvenate migrating bird flyway.
- More life on the river – wildlife and humans.
- Diversity of species.
- More access, safe access.
- Drinking water and freshwater supply.
- Restoration of more wetland.
- Recreation – throughout the whole system.
- It will be fishable.
- It will be swimmable.

**Big ideas:**

- A river that can balance both industrial and environmental values (don't know if this is possible).
- A bike path from Sioux City to Omaha!
- Use the need to address dam repair as an opportunity to address river's needs.
    - Dams in the 1950s were built with a 100 year lifespan. There is an opportunity to use this as part of the restoration effort.

**Values:**

- Sioux City's identity and history is the river, the people who lived here, the river industry that was established, etc.
    - Appreciation of heritage.
    - Synergy between community and river.
- People need to have greater appreciation the water and river as a resource. "Water is sacred."
    - Telling the story: One participant remembered growing up without running water until she was a teen. She and her family obtained their water from the well and from the river. "People take water for granted. But if you've ever had to be without water you realize how important it is. No bath, no cooking, breaking ice, heating up the water."
    - Telling the story and raising awareness of the heritage and local history of the river (including the history related to Native American tribes). The assumption is that by knowing the past people will better treat the river in the present and future.

    - Although awareness is needed across the population, we especially need to educate children on importance of water and river.
- Education values – learning to appreciate, get outside and get connected with the river.
    - Education centers on the river to teach kids, wildlife and habitat projects they can learn from.
- Encouraging kids to play and learn in the water.
    - A creek/tributary to the MO River was restored with a "path" and kids were boating/swimming/recreating down this safer creek. The city stated that the quality of the river was not good enough (there was treated effluent being discharged above where the kids are). "This is not right. Kids should have the ability to get dirty and play in the river/nature."
- Being connected with the outdoors and outdoor activities.
    - Hiking/biking trails.
- Safety.
- Water quality and quantity are very important for health reasons.

**MOVING FORWARD**

**Barriers/Problems?**

- Communication: More than a study of water, it's a study of people.
    - People in "higher ranks," and stakeholders, too.
- Tension between upstream and downstream states and interests.
    - Attributable to relationships and expectations of the river.
    - More tribal communities upstream.
    - Recreation tied to dams.
    - Removing water from this basin and moving it elsewhere will create new legal issues.
- If no restoration occurs over the next 30-50 years, then:
    - There will be less diversity of species.
    - Native species will decline.
    - Channel will deepen due to sediment loss.
    - Farmland will erode.
    - Erosion will damage highway system and bridges.
    - Water supply will be stressed.
- Political and legal issues.
    - Matters get caught up in litigation.
    - Money drives decisions in favor of agriculture.
- Lack of trust & confidence in government and science.
    - USACE, FWS and other key decision makers will not recognize science that doesn't support governmental positions, approaches, and solutions.
    - Distrust of biased science.
- Water rights, sovereignty issues for tribes.
- There is huge distrust of the Corps from the ag interests in the region.
    - There is no response from the Corps when contacted.
- The Corps put in some islands for habitat and it caused issues with bank stabilization for agricultural land owners.
- Habitat loss.
- All matters are so intertwined and interconnected.
    - One action has lots of interconnected effects.

    - Hydrological connectivity.
    - Watershed connectivity.
- Invasive/introduced species.
    - Are there species that this river can never support? For example, walleye and northern are being introduced for sport fishing that are predators for pallid sturgeon.
- Faulty science- concerns over sturgeon, plover and terns.
    - Need for additional science, incorporate new science.
    - Need to rely on peer-review science.

**What should be fixed? How?**

- Think about interconnections when developing solutions.
    - Natural system doesn't operate in isolation.
    - Neither does human world.
- Focus on wetlands and habitats outside the flood plain.
    - River includes the floodplain, not just the channel. There are big meanders – the whole area is flood plain.
- Need more interconnection among habitats.
- Need hydrology to be restored.
    - Work with hydrology to address biodiversity needs.
- Important to protect threatened and endangered species.
    - For example, partridges, quails, eagles.
- Introduced, non-native species are too pervasive to try to get rid of, so "work arounds' may be needed. For example, make habitat "off-line" of the river to foster threatened species.
- The river is degrading and will continue to degrade to bedrock, and will eventually degrade the tributaries.
    - Examine existing channels.

**Opportunities – How?**

- Don't think inside a box, think in terms of interconnections, networks, and webs.
- Create an environment where all can thrive.
- Prioritize.
- Clean up of the river.
    - An industry in itself.
    - Teachable tool to get kids outside.
- There are opportunities to create more back channels for shallow water habitat.
- Opportunity for there to be a slower current to increase recreational activities through:
    - Meanders in river.
    - Mini-reservoirs.
    - Much more bio-mass.
- Opportunity to consult and communicate across states, agencies, tribes.
- Science:
    - Better communication, sharing science/info in an open forum.
    - Require agencies to share the science they're using as the basis for decisions.
    - Incorporating new science into decisions (e.g., biological opinions).
    - Collaborative science (collaborations with stakeholders).
- New technologies may mean decreased demands for water by utilities.
- Agriculture and businesses will be impacted.

**Natural Resources Issues**

- Cottonwoods.
- Floodplain- native plant species along the banks.
- Juneberries, choke cherries.
- Deer, turkeys.
- Zebra mussel, Eurasian millefoile, other invasives.
- NRCS has a wetland reserve program that pays farmers fair market value for the land and the NRCS does the wetlands restoration. In Ponca Park, they've created wetlands and they've been great.
- Natural resource focus should be on wetlands and habitats.

**What does restoration mean?**

- Opportunity for species to thrive.
    - Healthier systems may open niches, allow for higher diversity and native species.
- Improved habitats, which provide intertwined values, leisure, aesthetic, economic, and community values.
- MR can support multiple uses: Power, clean water, navigation and recreational uses.

**Trade Offs after Restoration**

- Continued long-term relationships, collaborations among various stakeholders.
- Interests of tribes must be attended to of sovereignty status.
- The physical status of the MR:
    - A meandering MR, like it was before industrialization and European settlement, is not realistic. What will the new MR look like? Who will decide?
    - What will the flow of the river be? The concept of "summer flow" is not really "navigation flow," as it accomplishes more purposes than navigation.
    - Can we achieve the "old river" with today's and tomorrow's technologies?
- Balancing water quantity and quality with human needs/consumption.

**<u>OBSERVERS' COMMENTS</u>**

Observer 1. Very impressed with the group today. This is not a quick fix or it would have been done already. The enormity and complexity is really sinking in across the basin. Impressed within this room that with so many interests and backgrounds the tone was civil all day long, and good ideas have come out of the session. Its very similar to what we're going through on the MRRIC- diverse group, doubts that we wouldn't get off the ground but now we're celebrating 1 yr anniversary. The point is, I believe that tensions between up and down stream with start to ease and as a basin we're proving that by consensus and other ways we'll be able make a healthy river that benefits people. Tough to sit and not say anything, quite vocal at MRRIC meetings.

Participant 2: Complicated process, but its evolved like it has because USACE and agencies have found that top-down management doesn't work. They do what they do and then ask forgiveness, which we're not good at giving. Now they're trying to get everybody involved, ask permission and then do it. Good to have buy-in. But, if you get to be part of the decision making process, we have responsibility. And we have many, many interest groups and problems. It's been a local issue up until now. The MRAPs study is probably going to make this a national issue. Then the restrictions that have been imposed can go out the window. Been spending a lot of money on this issue, but the money might be drying up after next year. Maybe things like this will continue to be funded, maybe they won't. But what we've found is if you come in with an agenda, you'd best tone it down. We have to be willing to bite off small chunks that

everyone can swallow. Solutions are when it gets tough. It looks hopeless but it is encouraging when you can get 40 people to agree on anything. We will keep nibble at things till we get them done. Tugboats and environment not necessarily against each other. None of these are. I come down here because I like the show, you guys did a great job on the show.

**FEEDBACK ON DRAFT REPORT**

- I am writing you in regards to the MRERP. First of all it should be called Preservation instead of Restoration because in order to call it restoration you would have to look at pictures from 80 to 100 years ago to restore it back to original. You talked about identity because of the river and Lewis & Clark. But there are a lot of places along the river that have that also. What separates Sioux City? There are some people that spend quite a bit of time at the river but most people can't afford to. At the meeting, mostly what I heard was discussion about a park somewhere up the river and another bike trail. The bike trails we have now are barely used. This isn't exactly Venice Beach, CA, the Floyd River trail is too hot with no water fountains, no shade, and no benches to sit on. The Perry Creek trail wasn't designed right to allow access without riding in traffic most of the time which is why the trail was created in the first place. I noticed a lot of people go across the Veterans Bridge without even looking at the river. At the meeting some people talked about the tourism in Sioux City, but the hotels are empty. They are also outdated and look like they are from the 1950's with no architectural design whatsoever. Being part Native American myself I know how sacred the river is, but it, and the lakes, are so polluted by runoff from herbicides that cause extensive algae growth that kills the fish and pesticides don't help either. They talk about economic growth but I see businesses closing up all over town. The barges haven't come to Sioux City in 5 years, and they only helped a few businesses anyway. It looks like Sioux City hasn't grown in 100 years. Even the Marina has closed down and now a small bar and a bad looking hotel is in its place. Only the docks are left. At the end of the meeting the Riverboat Captain pretty much told the audience where that meeting had gone, nowhere. The people there talked about what they were going to give their grandchildren 50 years from now and what we were going to give them to remember us by. Most of us there are already grandparents and are about to become great-grandparents. In 50 years our grandchildren will be having great-grandchildren, and what are we going to give them? The same thing we have now, a dilapidated little town with no opportunity and no future. That is why all the college kids graduate and then move somewhere else. Sometimes I think I like this town better than most of the locals do. Get out and talk to Sioux Cityans on the street and find out what the real people think. Thank You.

**MRERP Civic Engagement Meetings Fall 2009**

**Final Report**

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# Attachment H

## South Dakota Report

# Oacoma, South Dakota
# September 28, 2009
# MRERP Civic Engagement Report

## Introduction

On September 28, 2009 forty-two citizens gathered at the Cedar Shore Resort in Oacoma, South Dakota for the Missouri River Ecosystem Restoration Plan (MRERP) civic engagement meeting. The group included 26 participants, 12 observers, and 4 facilitators. Although 35 citizens had responded positively to attend and participate in the meeting, the 26 individuals who did make it to the meeting represented a wide range of occupations and interests in the river restoration. They included ranchers, farmers, business leaders, educators, water managers, tribal leaders, and retired residents. They represented 15 of the 17 counties and two of the five reservations contiguous to the river in addition to citizens from across the state (Appendix A).

The observers were composed of individuals from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, South Dakota Game, Fish, and Parks Service, South Dakota Environment and Resources, representatives from nonprofit organizations, and environmental consultants. Two facilitators were from the South Dakota Public Policy Institute, a project of the Chiesman Center for Democracy, and two facilitators were from the U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution.

## Methodology

In order to obtain a list of potential participants, a majority of the County Extension Service agencies and Chambers of Commerce in the counties contiguous to the river and past SDPPI workshop participants were contacted for names of individuals who might be interested in participating in the MRERP meeting. In addition, representatives from the U.S. Corps of Engineers, U.S. Department of Fish & Wildlife, CAT, and MRRIC were contacted for possible participants. A list of 125 persons was developed. Appendix B provides examples of letters sent to the participants to invite them to participate and notification of their names being added to the participants' list. Care was taken to make sure that there was wide representation of citizens based on geography, occupation, level of interest, and any conflict of interest.

Appendix C shows an advertisement of the notification of the meeting in the Chamberlain newspaper. The wording of the notice was provided by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and was printed two weeks before the meeting in the Chamberlain/Oacoma Sun newspaper.

In preparation for the meeting, at least 10 conference and one-on-one telephone calls were held with the U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution. Each meeting was aligned to one of the five tasks determined to help develop and implement questions, protocol, and expectations for the MRERP Meeting. Representatives from the seven sites in which meetings were to be held participated in the discussions. As a result of these conference calls and communications, the SDPPI was able to align its meeting outcomes and outputs with the other sites. The format for the South Dakota civic engagement meeting was the product of the planning meeting discussions and consensus regarding the

questions to be asked and the procedures for holding the meeting. The day was divided into seven sessions beginning at 10:30 am and ending at 4:30 pm.

Session I was a welcome and introduction of all the participants and observers. There was a short explanation of the purpose of the MRERP civic engagement meeting with a highlight on the objectives. Ground rules were given for the meeting and an overview of how information would be collected and shared throughout the day. The participants were divided into four small groups of 8 persons with two or more observers. A facilitator was assigned to each group to guide the discussions based on the questions developed by the planning team. The observers were not to participate in the small group discussions, but could serve as an information source if there was a need. The small groups, depending upon the session, met for 30 to 35 minutes. Then the groups reconvened into a plenary session in which participants were designated as reporters to the large group. All information gathered was recorded on flip chart paper.

In Session II the focus groups answered a series of questions on the values surrounding restoration in three areas: (1) social context and identity, (2) community, and (3) economic vitality. Appendix E contains the document used for this session. After 35 minutes, the groups reconvened into a large group in which their discussion conclusions were shared. Participants continued their discussions in the large group with more clarification of any ideas or concepts presented by each of the focus group reporters.

In Session III Mr. Wayne Nelson-Stastny from the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service presented a *PowerPoint* presentation regarding the Missouri River Ecosystem Restoration Plan. He explained the law, timeline, and expectations for the various levels of discussion taking place in the Missouri River basin. Questions from the participants were answered by the presenter. The presentation took about one hour.

In Session IV the focus groups were asked to describe a future in which the Missouri River ecosystem had been completed. In their discussion the groups formulated the conditions and features of the future ecosystem if full implementation was successful. After a 35 minute small group discussion, the results were presented to the large group with additional clarification and input from all the participants.

In Session V the focus groups discussed the following topics: (1) issues and problems that affect the Missouri River basin, (2) potential opportunities, and (3) some possible actions related to the natural resources. Over 30 minutes was spent in the small groups with a large group presentation and discussion. (Appendix D)

In Session VI input from the observers was welcomed. Only two observers made comments regarding the meeting. The first comment was a thank you to everyone for participating in the meeting and providing valuable input and ideas to the proposed ecosystem plan. The second comment was a compliment to the participants and the process. It was evident that everyone was committed to the future of the Missouri River and that their personal experiences had contributed to ideas and issues not presented in other groups. The SDPPI process appeared to provide a mechanism and space for open and innovative discussions.

Session VII was spent reflecting upon the meeting and determining if the day's meeting had value. There was consensus that the meeting had achieved the objectives it had set for itself and that everyone had learned not only about the MRERP but also additional issues and concerns regarding the river and the basin. Participants were provided an opportunity to write additional comments on prepared forms if their values, vision, concerns, or proposed actions were not addressed in the small or large group discussions.

## Values Surrounding Restoration

### *Social Context and Identity*

The river and its basin has had a history that continues to provide a reliable source of quality potable water for people, animals, and communities; an irrigation water source for crops; a flood management and protection function; a source of food (fishing); and recreation for all citizens. Additionally, the dams have provided a source for low cost electricity throughout the region and western states. Initially the river had a transportation role, but with the creation of the dams in the past 60 years, navigation has been limited to local sites. The participants believe the river has an identity aspect that not only divides South Dakota into two distinct regions, but provides cultural boundaries that have contributed to diversity and preservation of a variety of indigenous and immigrated cultures.

The participants valued the aesthetic and ecological elements the river basin has contributed to South Dakotans and visitors. The beauty and recreational potential of the river has made it a site for short and long term residence. Thus, there is value in preserving the natural habitats, vegetation, and feeder streams into the Missouri River. Any environmental threats to the current ecosystem are a threat to the quality of life for South Dakotans and the other states that depend on the river.

There are many archeological and paleontological sites along the river that must be studied and preserved. These sites provide a historical perspective that could be lost if not recovered and documented. Many tribes resided along the river before 1800 that do not exist today. With the establishment of reservations in the late 1800s, there has been a gradual disconnect between the indigenous peoples and the Missouri River. The participants believed that there must be an emphasis on the preservation of these traditional values and sources of life for all people - past, present, and future.

### *Community*

The major contributions of the river to a community's quality of life have included resources and economic opportunities. The river is an attraction for newcomers to South Dakota and a reason for minimizing outmigration. It encourages the expansion of river-based communities and attracts individuals to reside after retirement, to create new businesses, and to raise their children. The river provides primary water sources that are affordable and safe. It creates agricultural communities that can rely on water sources and electricity to help their operations become successful. It is a recreational source for in-state, out-of-state, and international individuals because of fishing, boating, and hunting opportunities.

The participants reported that the multifunctional aspects of the river contribute to marketing a community that is interested in preserving and expanding any ecological initiative that makes the river better and available for all people. Many businesses and homes have been built along the river. There is a positive outlook that this will continue as long as there is an effort to preserve, expand, and restore the river basin.

### *Economic Vitality*

Participants reported that individuals residing along the river had a large diversity of jobs available to them. These included jobs in the areas of hunting, fishing, arts, recreation, tourism, water management, wildlife and fishery management, hydroelectricity, etc. The opportunities for new businesses create an economic impact for any county or community along the river. Without the river, these positions and opportunities would have a disastrous impact on the state of South Dakota. Ranchers and farmers along the river basin rely on the water source for irrigation of crops and watering of their animals.

Originally, the river was used for transportation, a source of food for the indigenous population, and a means for trading of goods between tribes and communities. The current economic source of the river is tourism, agriculture, recreation, electric power, fishing, and hunting. The economic vitality of any river-based community is heavily dependent upon these resources. The participants agreed upon the value of the river as an economic strength for the preservation and growth of any river community. Thus an ecosystem restoration plan must take into consideration the impact it has on a community.

Another economic impact of the river is how it is able to manage downstream flooding. The dams are able to control the river flow and thus prevent any extensive flooding and loss of property and land downriver. The hydroelectric plants provide a source of low-cost electricity to residents along and beyond the river. This serves as an economic boost for the area and reduces the cost for any industry requiring high electrical demand. Having the river as a water source reduces the cost to individuals and businesses for water. Additionally, the quality and location of the water requires minimal processing and transportation.

***Life-Supporting/Biocentric Values***

Overall, the participants realized an ethical and moral responsibility for the preservation of the river and assuring the development and protection of the ecological habitats. Without an active and on-going commitment to protecting the river basin, the economic, social, and environmental elements would be lost to all peoples and communities. There is an inherent responsibility of all citizens to assure that the quality of the river and its habitats are preserved, protected, and restored. Individuals and communities can do their part, but it requires the state and federal agencies such as the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, to provide the leadership and resources to make this a reality. All of the participants realized that there were funding as well as public policy issues that needed to be addressed, but there was an expression for expediency and short-term action as opposed to the long-term plans being proposed.

## Purpose and Need Statements

***Concerns and Barriers***

The participants listed a series of issues and concerns regarding the development of ecosystem plans that would contribute to the preservation and restoration of the river. One of the major concerns focused on the sedimentation within the river and the dams. Sedimentation is rapidly filling the dam areas, but also contributing to hampering and blocking of many river intake and outtake systems. Another concern is the erosion of the river banks and tributaries. The combination of sedimentation and erosion has created the change of the river flow and the destruction and elimination of farm acreage along the river. The creation of river islands and sandbars can have mixed benefits, but their opportunities are short lived.

Another concern is the loss of the trees and vegetation along the river due to the erosion of the banks. The loss of the vegetation accelerates the erosion process which in turn contributes to more sedimentation problems along the river. The fine silt produced from the erosion and tributary runoffs affect the water quality and must be monitored by communities that use the river as a water source. The dams might serve as flood control devices, but they also contribute to temperature modifications, rate of water flow, and release of quantifiable amounts of silt.

Other concerns included the lack of funding sources, bureaucracy, laws and regulations, political, and geographic interests. Without a river education program, incorrect information about what is going on with the river can generate a stop gap in doing what is needed to preserve and restore the river. The consequences of not making accurate information available about the river produce an emotional response that might not be beneficial to the river basin. There was concern whether a plan would be

inclusive of all the river users from Montana to Missouri, from the farmers to the residents of the river communities, from towns to federal government.

Barriers to the implementation of any plan included the U. S. Congress, state legislatures, U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, and U. S. Fish and Wildlife Services. A lack or minimal public input could serve as a barrier, especially if the correct information is not made available to the citizens. For those not living along the river, they could view a restoration or preservation effort as a waste of financial and human resources. "What is wrong with the river? It looks great." Another barrier would be the forces of nature or geology. Changes in weather can be unpredictable from excessive rain to drought. Extreme weather changes could impact any ecosystem plan if not anticipated. The same could be true of an unforeseen geological event – earthquake or land shift due to subterranean phenomena. The best the engineers and scientists can do is to create a plan based on geological history of the area undergoing restoration.

***Opportunities***

With the available new technology and the numerous scientific studies, the Corps has an opportunity to develop a successful and meaningful plan for the entire Missouri River basin. There are procedures for preserving and restoring ecological habitats that can sustain themselves for future generations. These habitats can contribute to increasing the quantity of fish, animals, and plants on the endangered species list. New species could be introduced to reduce erosion, provide more fish and wildlife varieties, and elevate the aesthetic views of the river. The participants discussed that the river could continue and expand being a renewable energy resource. The Gregory County pump storage system was designed to use wind energy to move water for irrigation, drinking, and turning electrical turbines. The wind would generate energy to assist pumping water to a higher level which in turn would be used to turn turbines as water is released to lower levels.

The participants saw this planning effort as a time to educate the public citizenry about the river and its impact on the quality of life of South Dakotans. They felt that education would generate support for any planning effort being proposed and would create better understanding of the importance of this endeavor for current and future generations. Additionally, a river education program would make citizens, user and non users, aware of the importance of good management of the river by being environmentally sensitive to the impact of waste, destruction, and misuse of the river resources.

***Natural Resources and Restoration Issues***

The participants were aware of the quantity and type of natural resources available along the river. The major issue was not necessarily restoration, but preservation and protection of the natural resources. There was a question about what was being restored. Was there a time baseline that the river was being restored to? The importance of balance between the natural resources and the use of the river was discussed. Using the river for recreation, a water source, fishing, hunting, and living puts a demand on the natural resources of the river. What is that balance and are there tradeoffs that must be considered as a plan is developed?

Developing resource laboratories and information centers along the river was seen as an effective way to educate citizens about the river and to study ways that contribute to the preservation of the river basin. Many scientific studies are difficult to understand and the center could serve as an interpretation facility. Such facilities currently exist in Nebraska.

Using the watershed district concept to have local people have a say on how the river is being managed was discussed by the participants. Local citizens, landowners, business owners, etc. would have a responsibility for protecting and preserving the natural resources within their respective districts. These local districts could serve as part of an advisory council to assure the implementation of MRERP or other regulations that contribute to the improvement and preservation of natural resources. If a vision

or plan is to be fully implemented, the citizens and users of the river basin have to be collaborative and cooperating partners.

There was discussion about the planning process. Some participants believed that the MRERP planning period was too long. Additionally, implementing a plan has to be a matter of expediency (short-term) versus something that would take thirty or more years. The participants believed there was urgency for developing and implementing a preservation or restoration plan for the river basin.

## Visioning the Future of the River

The participants' vision for the river was one of sustaining the beauty and functionality of the river. The river has a multifunctional reality and any vision for the future of the Missouri River basin must assure citizens that it will be available for generations to come. When considering the vision it must include the elements of recreation, fishing, hunting, boating, camping, and residency as critical uses for the river. The river must continue to serve as a water source for communities and farms. It should be a place where wildlife habitat protects and provides an ecologically balanced environment for animals and plants. It should serve as source of renewable energy and flood control.

In building a vision for the river, there must be a way to educate all citizens about these important natural and physical resources. Without this component, only individuals living along the river will be the agents for preserving the basin. Visitors and non-resident users of the river have to value the importance of their efforts and responsibility in treating the river as a limited resource if abused.

The participants echoed a vision in which there was a check on erosion and sedimentation using plants and other proven technologies. Without this check, the river direction, dam use, and agricultural land use would cease to be of any value. Having good sedimentation control would provide deeper channels for improved fish life and boating.

A vision for the river included the protection of archeological and paleontological sites. These sites are important for the understanding and study of the peoples who resided and used the river before the settlement of recent groups of people.

There was a previous plan to have roads that paralleled the river. Some participants had a vision of these roads being built so that citizens could have access to the river at various sites throughout the 17 contiguous counties in South Dakota. Additionally, the river would be accessible to the five tribes along the river. The river serves as a cultural link to the past and future for the tribes. With the reintroduction of the watershed districts and the tribal management councils, the river could be seen as a resource that belongs to the people and not to a government agency.

# Appendix A

# Participants & Observers List

## Participants

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# Appendix B

# Letter of Invitation
# Letter of Acceptance

August 27, 2009

Ms. Pat Harer
South Whitlock Resort
29500 US Highway 212
Gettysburg, SD 57442

Dear Ms. Harer:

The South Dakota Public Policy Institute (SDPPI), a project of the Chiesman Center for Democracy, has contracted with the U. S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution to conduct a civic engagement meeting regarding the U. S. Corps of Engineers' Missouri River Ecosystem Restoration Plan.

You have been selected to receive an invitation to participate in this meeting to give input on the Corps' plan. This meeting will be on Monday, September 28 at the Cedar Shore Resort in Oacoma. Space at this meeting is limited and is by invitation only.

Our charge is to gather citizens whose voices have not yet been heard on how the Missouri River affects them or their community. We are inviting a diverse group of individuals with varying interests and geographical locations along the river. We are inviting you to provide input and be part of this dialogue.

An RSVP is required by September 4. You can contact me or Jeanmarie Heriba at 605-341-4311 (jusera@chiesman.org, jheriba@chiesman.org) with your RSVP or for further information. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Dr. John Usera
Director

Enclosure

September 10, 2009

Mr. Tom Oster
PO Box 407
Avon, SD 57315

Dear Mr. Oster:

Thank you for your acceptance of the South Dakota Public Policy Institute's invitation to participate in a civic engagement meeting to give input on the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers' Missouri River Ecosystem Restoration Plan (MRERP). Logistics are:

- Meeting Date: Monday, September 28
- Location: Cedar Shore Resort, 1500 Shoreline Drive, Oacoma
- Time: 10:30 am – to approximately 4:30 pm

Enclosed are: 1) draft meeting agenda, 2) MRERP Environmental Impact Statement fact sheet. An Army Corps representative will give a presentation on the restoration plan during lunch.

To view a slide presentation on the Corps' Environmental Impact Statement, please visit: http://www.mo-rast.org/Meetings/12-07/MR%20Ecosystem%20Restoration%20Plan.pdf. Other information can be found at www.mrerp.org.

The meeting invitation was extended to you as a private citizen and your views will represent your own, not those of your workplace or organization membership. We look forward to hearing your input on September 28. Meanwhile, if you have any questions, please contact us.

Sincerely,

Dr. John Usera
Director

Enclosures

September 10, 2009

Mr. Tom Oster
PO Box 407
Avon, SD 57315

Dear Mr. Oster:

Thank you for your acceptance of the South Dakota Public Policy Institute's invitation to observe a civic engagement meeting to gather input on the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers' Missouri River Ecosystem Restoration Plan (MRERP). Logistics are:

- Meeting Date: Monday, September 28
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We look forward to seeing you on September 28.

Sincerely,

Dr. John Usera
Director

Enclosures

# Appendix C

# Notification of Meeting

## U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
## NOTICE OF FOCUS GROUP MEETING

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), in partnership with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), is initiating a collaborative long-term study authorized by the Water Resources Development Act of 2007. The name of this study is the Missouri River Ecosystem Restoration Plan and Environmental Impact Statement (MRERP EIS). The result will be a fully integrated plan and environmental impact statement (EIS), prepared following National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and USACE planning guidance. Once completed, the MRERP will result in a policy/programmatic-level plan that will determine and describe high-level priorities and criteria for projects that address mitigation, recovery, and restoration of the Missouri River.

The USACE will hold focus group meetings for the MRERP EIS in locations throughout the Missouri River Basin to describe the project and the planning process, and to solicit input on the project scope, purpose and need, issues, and other related matters.

One of the focus group meetings will be held on September 28, 2009 from 10:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. in Oacoma, South Dakota. This focus group meeting will include a small group of active participants accompanied by group of observers. This focus group activity is an exercise to trigger both active participants and observers to consider key scoping elements and hear different viewpoints. Participants for the focus groups will be identified beforehand and will reflect a diverse range of communities and interests in the basin. This focus group meeting is also open to observers. Although observers will not actively participate in the exercise, they will have an opportunity to provide input on the content and process they observed. Obtaining input from active participants as well as observers is a central purpose of these meetings. Space is limited. To reserve your space as an observer or for additional information about this focus group meeting, please send an e-mail to jusera@chiesman.org or 605-341-4311 by September 21, 2009

Information pertaining to scoping and the overall project can be found on the web at www.mrerp.org. Written comments for scoping will be accepted until December 1, 2009.

Questions and comments specific to the project and EIS should be addressed to:
Jennifer Switzer
Project Manager
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
601 E. 12th Street
Kansas City, MO 64106
Email Address to Submit Comments: comments@mrerp.org

# U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS NOTICE OF FOCUS GROUP MEETING

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Questions and comments specific to the project and EIS should be addressed to:

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# Appendix D

# Session Information
# &
# Guides

# Missouri River Ecosystem Restoration Plan
# Session II: Values Surrounding Restoration

**Instructions:**
In this session the focus groups will be asked to discuss the values surrounding restoration in three areas: (1) social context and identity, (2) community, and (3) economic vitality. Using the guiding questions, on separate flip chart paper for each area, summarize your responses in a bullet format. The results of your discussions will be shared with the large group.

**Social Context and Identity (15 minutes)**

1. Knowing your history (oral or written), what are the values and benefits of the Missouri River and its ecosystem?
2. What are your needs related to the Missouri River? Are your needs being met?
3. What is the most important benefit you get from the river?
4. What is your connection to the Missouri River?
5. What are the specific practices and traditions that are central to these values?

**Community (10 minutes)**

1. How does the Missouri River affect your community's quality of life?
2. How has the Missouri River shaped the culture of your community?
3. How might the Missouri River share the culture of your community into the future?

**Economic Vitality (10 minutes)**

1. What does the Missouri River mean to your own and your community's (or state's) economic vitality, diversity, and sustainability?
2. How would your community be economically impacted without the use of the Missouri River?

## Missouri River Ecosystem Restoration Plan
## Session IV: Future Scenario Visioning

**Instructions:**
In this session the focus groups will be asked to describe a future in which the Missouri River ecosystem has been completed. In describing the future, how does the ecosystem look different from today? Use the following questions to guide the discussion and record the group's response on the flip chart paper. You will be asked to share your scenario with the large group. (35 minutes)

1. What is your vision for a restored Missouri River?
2. What conditions and features would be present?
3. What actions or plans need to take place to get us to your vision for the Missouri River?
4. If your vision becomes a reality, how is the Missouri River different from today? How do people connect to it?
5. How would you measure successful restoration of the Missouri River ecosystem?
6. What would full implementation of the plan look like?

## Missouri River Ecosystem Restoration Plan
## Session IV: Future Scenario Visioning

**Instructions:**
In this session the focus groups will be asked to describe a future in which the Missouri River ecosystem has been completed. In describing the future, how does the ecosystem look different from today? Use the following questions to guide the discussion and record the group's response on the flip chart paper. You will be asked to share your scenario with the large group. (35 minutes)

1. What is your vision for a restored Missouri River?
2. What conditions and features would be present?
3. What actions or plans need to take place to get us to your vision for the Missouri River?
4. If your vision becomes a reality, how would the Missouri River different from today? How do people connect to it?
5. How would you measure successful restoration of the Missouri River ecosystem?
6. What would full implementation of the plan look like?

# Missouri River Ecosystem Restoration Plan
## Session V: Moving Forward – Restoration Actions

**Instructions:**
In this session the focus groups will be asked to discuss the following topics: (1) issues and problems that affect the Missouri River, (2) potential opportunities, and (3) some possible actions. Use the following questions to guide the discussion and record the group's response on the flip chart paper. You will be asked to share the results of your discussions with the large group. (30 minutes)

**Issues and Problems**

1. What do you think are the issues and problems that affect the Missouri River ecosystems?
2. What are some barriers to fixing these problems?
3. What should be changed or fixed?

**Opportunities**

1. What are some opportunities that exist that relate to the problem?
2. What does the restoration mean to you and the opportunities?

**Possible Actions**

1. What are the trade-offs with respect to restoration?
2. What natural resources should be addressed or considered?
3. What action would you like to see taken that is related to these natural resources?
4. What should a restoration plan do?

# Appendix E

# MRERP Civic Engagement
# Small Group Meeting Comments

# Transcript from Small & Large Group Sessions

**(Notes were copied from flipcharts used to record the major points of discussion.)**

**Session II: Values Surrounding Restoration**

*Social Context and Identity*

- River brought us here-history
- Recreation: fishing, boating
- Water quality and quantity: potable water, water for 33K people
- Flood protection
- Identify not just the river, but banks, bluffs, environment has changed
- All economic activities started around river
- History is the big picture
- River itself is our identity
- East and west river identity (west: agriculture, rural, not glacial) (east: populated, urban, glacial till)
- Needs: irrigation, fresh water, recreation, flood control
- In long term-priorities have changed, use has expanded
- Are needs being met?
- Recreation partially- communities suffer when water is low, power production is a problem when water is low
- River connection to weather adds value to farmland, crops
- Adequate supply of fresh/clean water
- Sedimentation affecting recreation, water supply
- Degradation of river banks: farm land, vegetation, loss of habitat
- Beauty, aesthetics
- Natural "view" versus artificial "bank" (soft stabilization)
- Water intakes: require more maintenance, changing locations of intakes, quality of water?
- Irrigation systems are impacted-sedimentation
- Magnet for population growth
- Source of life
- Source of transportation
- Grew up next to river
- Source of water: domestic/drinking
- Tribe has no quantifiable right to Missouri River water. Economic potential not allowed to tap
- Having water in landscape is as natural as breathing. "It is who you are."
- Recreation
- Educational aspect of river: paleontological digs
- Drinking water is clean and abundant, has improved since dam
- Water quality. We don't spend enough energy with
- Aging of system: things have changed, have been dramatic. Sedimentation. Now there are green algae blooms
- Campsite had to be moved because of erosion
- Farming: erosion cuts away land, bank stabilization would be beneficial in certain areas
- Losing cottonwoods
- Need to save what's there from erosion
- Some restoration actions have negative effect on other river uses (sandbar islands: waste of ??)
- Boating/hunting: wide and shallow (is continuing). Pouka, Nebraska to Yankton is dangerous to travel
- Values and benefits
  - Water source: agriculture - irrigation, recreation – fishing & boating, jobs, hydropower, drinking water, irrigation, flood control
- Needs

    - Fix sedimentation, sediment control, more power generation, stable level, model above White River delta
- Benefits
    - Drinking water, irrigation, recreation, low cost power, jobs, tourism, navigation downstream
- Connection
    - Jobs, irrigation, drinking water, tourism (recreation and fishing), quality of life
- Practices and traditions
    - Fishing/ice fishing, ranching 100 years along river, sustainable water supply (domestic irrigation)

*Community*

- Able to get clean, affordable potable water. Used to be wells
- Quality of life is the river (Pierre): boating, skiing, kayaking, hiking, fishing, goose hunting, aesthetics-it's beautiful!. This brings people to the town
- Missouri River is a selling point/draw to Burke. Moving there and tourism
- Used in interviews and recruiting for jobs
- Hydropower-everyone gets an allocation. Keeps rates affordable
- Future-community
- Sedimentation issues, sandbars
- Water quality, flood control, recreation
- Could use the river more for education, history-teach our own story
- Pick-Sloane promises were not realized: irrigation
- Economic vitality
- Hydropower-majority of electricity: affordable power, affects communities across the state
- River provides primary water source for most communities: affordability, community health and livestock because of water quality better than wells
- Tourism is big part of economy: major second biggest industry from instate and out, brings people from other towns to river, fishing
- Erosion contributes to loss of taxes/revenue
- Habitat for wildlife is decreasing, moving away
- Rising water table converting crop land to wet land
- Recreation: camping, boating, fishing, etc.
- River has seemed to help people downstream in other states
- Affects social and economic aspects of communication
- River dictates everything we do
- Every type of habitat you could want in one area
- Community – Quality
    - Jobs: higher income, availability of jobs, casino jobs, RWS jobs
    - Natural beauty, drinking water (existence), water conservation, tourism
- Community - Culture
    - Recreation centers on river, tourism
    - Made community bigger because of flooding, pumped storage
    - Types of jobs: hunting and fishing guides, arts, recreation, visiting monuments
- How impacted without use: loss of jobs, lower population

*Economic vitality*

- Historically transportation of goods now, dams
- Without use of river
- Many communities would not be there without tourism, and recreation
- Would have to revamp water supply
- Summer homes/retirement homes
- Permanent residency
- Recreation: economic impact for river communities
- Camping, fishing, boating, etc.
- Tourism: visit historical sites/parks

- Development of new communities along river (trophy homes)
- Dams and sedimentation contributed to loss of farm land

- Economic: tourism has become important
- Recreation trails
- Missouri River has shaped culture. Originally with trade
- Come full circle working together to move state forward
- Tribe has lost "way of life" following reservoir: no fishing, can't grow trees, people don't swim, don't have "means" to use river, lost economic use of river
- Sedimentation has impacted drinking water system needs $ = up arrow
- Even the thought of the river impacts community activities
- Affects decisions of local governments
- Access (public versus private) can be an issue
- Limited boat docks on west side
- Used to have island with recreation opportunities. It was taken way, not the same
- Hydro power – energy to communities
- Communities have changed: agriculture to recreation
- Canals could benefit local agriculture
- Sport fishing is second biggest economic impact
- Irrigation use
- Flood control

**Session IV**

*Future Scenario Visioning*

- River that is:
  - friendly: recreation, improved access
  - healthy, not polluting (not undue)
  - stable: bank stabilization to check erosion, siltation control
  - efficient: hydropower, better production
  - beauty: keep natural beauty as much as possible. This is our history
- River that is sustainable
- Money
- Balance between wildlife and people needs aren't always compatible. Keep quality of life
- Current conditions as baseline for preservation. Dams have lifespan – review goals, time span
- Reforestation and bank stabilization. Cottonwoods lined the river. Deer, beaver
- Stable water levels: affects vegetation, erosion
- Actions and plans
  - Money is needed
  - Long term planning. Is 30-50 years long enough?
  - Not politicized, bureaucracy
  - Include master manual
  - "Preserve and improve"
- Quality of life
- Maintain dams
- Sediment control
- Not billions of dollars to save pallid sturgeon, etc.
- Can't and don't want at original state
- Maintain fisheries
- Do everything to maintain current river
- More access for fishing boats, walking
- Designated development
- Protect and maintain the natural river below Ft. Peck, below Garrison to Bismarck, Ft. Randall
- Gainers and losers
- Upgrade power plants

- Recycle power
- Renewable energy
- Coupling wind and hydro
- More check dams in small tributaries
- Protect cultural sites
- More emphasis on watersheds
- How would it look different?
    - More check dams and trees, cottonwoods
    - Beaver dams
    - More shelter belts
    - Riparian areas
    - Managed by areas/ecosystems
- Sediment traps: improved water quality, improved capacity of reservoirs
- Improved sedimentation management: basin wide
- Maintain quality and quantity of system as it is today
- Boat races = economic
- Improve bank erosion
- More return to native prairie grass
- Holistic Missouri River basin management to return natural function i.e. flooding for cottonwoods
- Minimize farm erosion
- Manage reservoirs for spawning habitat (native and non native)
- Recreation opportunities
- Maintain flood control ??
- Boat ramps increase recreation
- Goose pits equal hunting and increased economy
- Good water quality
- More islands: habitat, summer recreation
- Fishing derbys and other events boost community
- More water flow reserves for conservation and hunting
- Recover beneficial species including beavers, check dams and wetlands
- Education of the people about river basin as a naturally changing/evolving system
- Continuous evaluation system and ability to make changes
- Energy production i.e. hydro, wind, renewable
- Extra basin usage i.e. outside of basin
- How to understand threats/opportunities and how to participate in process
- Development of pump storage using renewable sources (wind) to move water uphill for electrical generation
- System for providing municipal areas having a lack of water sources. Also, could be used for irrigation
- Natural resource conservation in the watershed
- More public access: trail along river, recreation areas, residences
- Balance between user and manager: consequences should be two pronged
- Everyone in the watershed will have quality and quantity water
- More irrigation for food production to feed the future populations
- Education of all people, residents, regarding the river and its impact on quality of life and survival
- Oil roads on either side of the river
- Fishing access points (expansion and functional)

**Session V**

*Issues and Problems*

- Balance everyone's needs
- Pollution: local and from downstream, big stuff and runoff, dredging disturbs contaminants
- Sedimentation biggest issue?
- Water levels are a two edged sword

- Endangered species: we're losing species, habitat loss, but ESA law not always conclusive, is species loss inevitable?
- Hydroelectric efficiency: opportunity is available technology
- Balance with out of state use
- Out of state uses continued: opportunity to do things on our terms
- Barriers
  - People – individual interests, geographic differences
  - Money
  - Political will/bureaucracy/autonomy
  - Laws and restriction
- Nature: what do you do in drought/flood years?
- Sedimentation: bank and tributary erosion
- Water quality
- Flow from dams affects water fluctuation, water temperature, habitat
- Fish spawning habitat
- River access
- Opportunities
- Targeted approach
- Create islands and sandbars/cottonwoods
- Holistic plan that takes into account unique local/regional management plans
- Maintain flood control benefits
- To define net zero impact (baseline)
- Maintain/improve energy production
- Watershed management
- "Do nothing" is not viable: need to educate next generation(s) on river evolution, start marketing changes
- Public education about MR
- Cost for restoration
- Ethical issues (accountability)
- Too long planning and implementation period
- Need short term plan with immediate implementation
- What is this scientific evidence? Need more information
- The Corps of Engineers
- Congress
- More input from local people!
- Barge traffic
- Navigation?
- Sedimentation
- Flooding/sedimentation/level control
- Non adherence to 44 flood control act amendment
- Lack of local input
- Lack of political clout

*Opportunities*

- Create Mo River basin district with states and provinces. Heavy citizen input, regular meetings
- Basin wide recognition that sedimentation is an issue. Recognized need, limited by funding, make revenue source-valuable nutrients-move efficiently
- Quantify savings through water projects, look for revenue sources eg. flood prevention, water storage
- Increase turbine efficiency through technology
- Gregory county pump storage, Blunt reservoir
- Natural resources
- Fish species monitoring: native and nonnative pollution effects
- Native vegetation on banks, stabilization
- Energy
- Beauty, views

- Natural habitat
- Access to natural resources: camping, fishing, boating, dispersed throughout reservoir system as needed
- Continued beneficial use of water: quality, quantity, availability to rural communities and agriculture
- Restoration plan should balance needs/efficient uses with natural resources
- To define "success"
- To determine what the river uses are
- Potential solutions
- Lower water levels, water always flows
- Education
- Collaboration
- Natural Resources
- Cottonwood islands
- Cottonwood overbanks
- Walleye
- Water (quantity)
- Native prairie
- Fish and wildlife
- Deer
- Wetlands
- Wild turkey
- Restoration means "putting it back the way it was"
- Restoration is "odd" for this type of plan. There is an evolution that needs to be managed
- Proactive/finding the best path forward
- An informed and educated public is restoration

- Tradeoffs:
- Making MR accessible to everyone along the whole river
- Renewable energy and water access using pump storage
- Transportation using MR from Montana to Missouri
- Bottom land: restore forest and wildlife habitat
- Preference power (utilities) lower cost energy
- Power/irrigation
- Wildlife enhancement
- Citizen input through organizational meeting similar to Equip. Dollars: input on how money is spent

*Possible Actions*

- More facilities (resource labs) for education, research, conferences and recreation (NE)
- Advisory council (public/citizen) to assure the implementation of MRERP
- Watershed districts: local people manage the area and work with local landowners
- Valid survey to get grassroot input with reason
- Update 44th amendment
- Corps people won't listen!
- Access to citizen liaison to Corp
- Achieving the Vision
- More public input
- More partners/cooperation
- To pay for the implementation of the vision: fee structures should be investigated
- Develop a benefit/loss ratio to prorate the cost by state for improvement of MR e.g. one year flood control has a value
- Public advisory council should be created to assure the implementation of the MRERP
- What makes it successful?
    - Balance
    - Keeping a high level view
    - The 8 authorized purposes

- Continued communication and planning, continued stakeholder involvement
- Ongoing representation of all stakeholders and public
- Preserve hydroelectric aspect: green and cheap

**Session VI: Input from Observers**

- They were impressed by the group's care for the river.
- The discussions were broad base and included topics from recreation to wildlife management to economics.
- There were many ideas expressed today that have not been heard in other civic engagement meetings. This information and input provides us (the observers) with many new ideas and perspectives.

**MRERP Civic Engagement Meetings Fall 2009**

**Final Report**

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# Attachment I

## North Dakota Report

**Final Report**

**Missouri River Ecosystem Restoration Plan (MRERP)**

**North Dakota - Civic Engagement Meeting Summary**

**September 30, 2009**

## Introduction

On September 30th, 2009, the Consensus Council (CC) convened 30 participants and 10 observers in Bismarck, North Dakota, for a Missouri River Ecosystem Restoration Plan (MRERP) civic engagement meeting. The purpose of that meeting was to engage members of the public in a discussion about the restoration of the Missouri River, with the intent to provide the feedback from the meeting to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for consideration in the MRERP. The meeting was one of eight held in states within the Missouri River basin during September and October of 2009. The participants were drawn from a broad representation of interests from North Dakota, including landowners, recreation, environmental, power/energy, local business, fish and wildlife, Native American Tribes, local government, water supply, education, tourism, development, ranching, and agriculture. A full list of participants is included in Appendix A. The observers included other members of the community, and included members of the Missouri River Recovery Implementation Committee (MRRIC) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The meeting was facilitated by the Consensus Council. And, staff members from the US Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution were also present. The meeting agenda is available in Appendix B.

The purpose of this document is to highlight the discussions and themes from that meeting. The complete set of detailed meeting notes is included in Appendix C.

## Methodology

Initially, a core group of stakeholders with whom the CC has worked on Missouri River and other water/natural resource related issues were identified and invited to the meeting. The CC called to invite each stakeholder personally. These stakeholders were also asked to provide contacts for other parties with an interest in the Missouri River. The CC also approached members of the Missouri River Recovery Implementation Committee (MRRIC) and the MRERP Cooperating Agency Team for feedback on potential invitees for the meeting. Using these sources, the CC developed a diverse group of potential participants that represented many of the primary interests involved in the Missouri River in North Dakota. Invitations were made of these individuals, and virtually all of those invited accepted the invitation and attended the meeting. The meeting was also open to those who wished to observe the meeting. An official meeting notice was placed in Bismarck Tribute. A copy of that advertisement may be found in Appendix D.

At the meeting, the participants were seated in a large diamond formation, with the facilitator at the front of the diamond. The meeting opened with introductions of the facilitation team, participants and

observers. During the introductions, the participants were asked to share their connection to the Missouri River. That was followed by a presentation on the MRERP by Wayne Nelson-Stastny of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Following the presentation, there were several group discussions regarding the social, cultural, and economic values, future vision, issues/concerns, opportunities, and potential restoration actions related to the Missouri River ecosystem restoration. All of those group discussions were conducted in a plenary format. Following the participant discussions, the observers in attendance were allowed to provide comments. A summary of the meeting follows, and the detailed meeting notes are included in Appendix C.

**I. Values discussion**

The values summarized in this section were drawn from several discussions throughout the meeting, including the participant introductions, personal and community values, future vision and observer comments. The purpose of this section is to highlight the major themes from those discussions. The detailed comments are included in Appendix C.

**a. Socio-cultural Values**

The Missouri River provides a deep personal connection for many of the participants in Bismarck. Many of the participants see the river as a friend, and an escape from the harshness of everyday life. Some enjoy the river for its rejuvenating effects, its aesthetic beauty, and its quiet power. A few believe the river is holy and sacred.

For North Dakotans, the Missouri River helps define their state. It provides a significant natural landmark, and is often associated with the state's tourism and recreation industries. Many North Dakotans take advantage of recreational activities on the river, from fishing, swimming, boating, water skiing, camping and hunting. However, some of those at the meeting noted that public access to the Missouri River was not always prevalent, and it could be improved to encourage easier use of the river resources.

There's also a substantial historical connection the river. The river is often viewed with respect to its homesteader history, and many in North Dakota have ties to its cultural heritage. Some felt there is a need to stabilize and mitigate significant archaeological sites that are at risk for eroding into the river. There is an educational aspect to the river, and it is sometimes used in teaching and educational settings. Tribal people have strong historical and cultural ties to the Missouri River in North Dakota. Many tribal people were removed from their place on the river, and hope to maintain their relationship with it. As one tribal participant noted, "The River is a living being, and it means a lot to our people…I have a deep spiritual connection with the river and desire to replace what was taken from our people".

Several participants feel the need to respect and to provide stewardship for the river. As one participant from a homesteading family said, "we have a privilege and a burden of caring for the river". Another participant mentioned, "I was taught how to give back to the river". Several of those in attendance

participated in annual litter clean ups, as well as stewardship of the river on their own lands. Some noted that is important to keep river as a resource, not a commodity.

North Dakotans also value the services that the river provides to their communities. From drinking water, water for farming and irrigation, power generation, and a resource for tourism and recreation – the participants believe that the river is a fundamental element for a good quality of life in their state.

**b. Livelihood and Wealth Values**

North Dakota participants view the Missouri River as an important element to their economy. However, most also believe that there needs to be a balance between the economic necessities and the non-financial benefits of the river. Some of the direct uses of the river that impact the North Dakotan economy include recreation, farming, energy and water supply. One participant noted that all values relating to the river need to be considered in an economic context. However, it was also believed by one participant that it is impossible to determine the economic value of nature. Others discussed the historical context of the river in the region, and its roots in trade and commerce.

The conversation moved towards the economic impact of downstream users. Participants believe that it is important to consider impacts to upstream and downstream riparian neighbors. One person was concerned that some economic activities on the river have been sustained although their benefits were marginable.

**c. Health and security values**

Some of the meeting participants directly linked the river's health to the health of the human populations on the river. As one person noted, "the River is sick, and the evidence is that all water needs to be treated before we can drink it". Another said, "Without water, what do we have"? Litter and agricultural runoff were viewed as pollutants that impact river health. Another participant noted that it is important to address the chemicals in sediment and siltation. Another security concern includes the affects of climate change on the river, and what that will mean for communities on the river. Flooding and drought were both mentioned as concerns facing people in North Dakota.

**d. Life Supporting/Biocentric Values**

Participants had the opportunity to discuss their values associated with the Missouri River ecosystem. Most would like to see thriving fish and wildlife populations, with a focus on recovering native species. Participants felt that the regeneration of cottonwood forests along with a return of native medicinal plants and traditional/native fruits and vegetables was important. Some felt that the river has lost its natural qualities, and now is a managed system, that should be improved to incorporate the natural, dynamic, and constantly changing attributes of a free flowing river. While balance is important between environmental, social and economic goals, the participants felt that some prioritization is required, and trade-offs should be explored. Above all, the river must remain sustainable to support future

generations. Some of the participants were concerned about potential impacts of (proposed) water transfers out of the basin, which may include biota transfers and environmental justice issues.

**II. Purpose and Need**

The meeting participants discussed the need for the MRERP. In the view of North Dakotans, one of the issues that have led to the need for the MRERP study includes the river management approach of the federal government, which has historically focused on flood management/mitigation and not natural resources. Other issues and actions that have led to the MRERP include a lack of private land easements in the North Dakota, economically based prioritization on river management activities, and inadequate funding for conservation and preservation. Other concerns relating to politics, government bureaucracy, and lack of stakeholder involvement also were mentioned. In addition, some noted that there was no unified vision for the river, and that different perspectives fractured management of the river. There was some concern that states in the lower basin were opposing change, and that the federal obligations to the states in the upper basin had been minimized.

However, the meeting participants felt that the MRERP had the opportunity to have a positive effect on the Missouri River and to the state of North Dakota. Some of the opportunities that were discussed include potential partnerships to increase funding for heritage projects, developing conservation reserve enhancement programs, limiting agricultural chemicals adjacent to the river, and creating a system of permanent easements along the river. Participants discussed the role of education in the MRERP, and noted that an effective educational component may provide interpretation and help broaden the discussion, help increase and improve partnerships, relationships, and networks, and utilize higher education to meet research needs. There are also opportunities to improve river management through additional stakeholder involvement, improved relationships between the federal government and stakeholders, and better state specific planning in North Dakota. Participants hoped that MRERP would inspire changes to the way the US Army Corps of Engineers approaches river management and relationships with stakeholders. As one participant noted, “this is an opportunity to drop the baggage from the past – to look and move forward, to get better outcomes for the river, which will be better outcomes for all that live on the river, both up and down stream”. One Native American participant noted that she hopes that the MRERP provides a platform to deepen the relationship and partnership between the federal government and the Native peoples, while restoring the values of concern and fairness.

**III. Natural Resource and Restoration Issues**

The participants felt that when considering restoration of the Missouri River, it will be important to learn from the past and to correct mistakes when possible. Some felt that where possible, the river should be returned to a dynamic state where sediment was moved by the river current. Water quality and quantity are important issues to the communities in North Dakota. And, the North Dakotans would like

to see a return of many of the native plants and animal species that were threatened or endangered, such as cottonwoods, eagles, pallid sturgeons, piping plovers, and others.

When thinking about restoration, some of the meeting attendees hope that the natural, basic, fundamental biological functions of the river ecosystem are valued. Others feel that restoration should be thought of in the context of creating access and amenities for recreation and leisure. There was also interest in restoring the human relationship with the river, and to view and manage the river from a holistic perspective.

**IV. Future Vision**

Participants were asked to consider their desires for the Missouri River restoration and the future condition of the river. The participants envisioned a strong public education component to support the river. There was an understanding that greater public education, engagement and enthusiasm would help build support for the restoration of the river and encourage good decision making. There also needs to be recognition of the river as an important aspect of the cultural heritage of the region, as well as for the entire United States. As such, the burdens and benefits of the Missouri River restoration should be shared by people across the entire country. Collective community and national support for good stewardship and restoration is vital to the success of the future of the river.

With respect to natural resources in the Missouri River Basin, several participants wondered what level of restoration should be targeted by the MRERP. As one person noted, "we cannot go back to the River in its original form…we need to cross cultures and agree upon what we are trying to get back to". Nevertheless, participants would like to see thriving fish and wildlife populations, regeneration of cottonwood forests, a return of native medicinal plants and traditional/native fruits and vegetables. Some would like to see a proactive effort, and whatever creative actions that need to occur, to reintroduce native animals such as buffalo, black ferrets, elk, eagles, and other species. Viable, sustainable and diverse biological and riparian habits should also be a priority.

The future Missouri River in North Dakota should also include adequate public access, which might include support and/or incentives to provide public access on private lands. The participants thought that open and non-developed spaces and large tracts of land should be placed in public holding for historic, conservation and other purposes along the river. There was also support for equitable use of the water – and most importantly, safe and accessible potable water should be available to all.

Commerce should continue to thrive on the river. However, there needs to be a balance and blending of the economic and environmental values of the river. For example, one participant noted, "while long-term cultural changes may be necessary, we operate from a more utilitarian perspective. We need to realize that rivers are vibrant corridors of commercial activity….Today's economy depends on human resources, and people are drawn to beautiful places. We need to make the economic case for ecological restoration".

Another participant felt that restoration of the river should be seen is terms of “restoring our relationship, the relationship of humans to the river”. This type of restoration can be viewed in terms of respect for the river, and its inhabitants.

With respect to the MRERP, the participants hope to see a well crafted and fully funded plan. Given the importance of learning from other successes, the MRERP should include a best practices approach. The MRERP, and other Missouri River restoration activities, should seek to include all stakeholders, including local and state governments, Tribes, land owners, and interest groups. And, there should be a recognition and support system for best management practices by private landowners along the river.

**APPENDIX A**
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## APPENDIX B- MEETING AGENDA

**10:30-11:15 a.m.—Welcome, Introductions, Proposed Ground Rules and Agenda**

- Brief introductions – Name, organization and/or community and your single most important/significant connection to the Missouri River
- Proposed Ground Rules and Meeting Agenda

**11:15 a.m.-12:30 p.m.—Presentation and Q&A**

- Overview and purpose of MRERP process and use of your input in that process—Wayne Nelson-Stastny, USFWS Project Lead for MRERP

**12:30-12:45 p.m.—Break to get lunch** (available at meeting site for participants and observers)

**12:45 – 1:45 p.m.—Working Lunch**

**Personal and "Community" Values and Reasons for Those Values**

- Social and Cultural Values—What do you value most about and regard as the primary societal benefits of the Missouri River and its ecosystem—e.g., aesthetics, education, leisure, traditions, quality of life, attachment to place?

- Economic Values—What does/should the Missouri River and its ecosystem mean to the economy of your community, state, (and nation?)—e.g., reliance on it by farmers, business, industry; impact on standard of living, energy production and sustainability of the economy?

- Health and Security Values—What value does/should the Missouri River and its ecosystem have for lives of humans, animal and plant species—e.g., clean water, food, reduction in deaths (from flooding and drought), environmental sustainability?

- Ethical Values—What moral or ethical standards do you believe are essential to consider with regard to the Missouri River and ecosystem—e.g., sustaining all life, natural environment, human responsibility?

**1:45 – 2:30 p.m.—Your Vision for the Future of the Missouri River and Ecosystem**

What is your notion of "restoration" and what, then, is your vision for a "restored" Missouri River and ecosystem? What conditions and features would be present? How would it be different than it is today? In your vision, how would people connect to it differently?

**2:30–3:15 p.m.— Issues and Opportunities**

What do you believe are the issues/problems/obstacles that affect the Missouri River and its ecosystem now? What are the current opportunities that exist in relation to addressing those problems?

**3:15-4 p.m.—Moving Forward: Purpose and Need/Restoration Actions Discussion**

Consider the MRERP presentation and the current "purpose and need" statements. Based on what you have heard and your (potentially shared) values, issues/problems, opportunities and vision for the future of the Missouri River and ecosystem, what seems appropriate in current planning? What needs to be changed—e.g., what is not in there, may be going in the wrong direction, etc.?

**4:00 – 4:15—Input from Observers**

**4:15 – 4:30—Reflections and Closing Comments**

**APPENDIX C: FULL SESSION NOTES**

**The North Dakota**

**Missouri River Ecosystem Restoration Plan (MRERP)**

**Civic Engagement Meeting**

**September 30, 2009**

**Bismarck, North Dakota**

**Participants/Stakeholders Present**

David Borlaug, Al Christianson, Brad Crabtree, Scott Davis, Mike Eggl, Ladd Erickson, Charles Fritz, Tex G. Hall, Marie Hoff, Craig Larson, Mike McEnroe, Sam McQuade, Steve Neu, Jack Olin, Sara Otte Coleman, Tracy Potter, Randy Renner, Jean Rolandelli, Ken Sambor, Al Sapa, Jerry Schaack, Russ Staiger, Chuck Suchy, Fern Swenson, Genevieve Thompson, Keith Trego, Marc Trimmer, Alan Walter, Pemina Yellow Bird, and Jasper Young Bear

**Observers and Staff**

Jonathan Bry, Steve Dyke, Terry Fleck, Herb Grenz, Paul Griffin, Dave Johnson, Milton Lindvig, Brian Manwaring, Lisa McDonald, Betty Morgan, Wayne Nelson-Stastny, John Paczkowski, Rose Stoller, and Sasha Stortz

**Facilitated By**

Dick Gross, The Consensus Council, Inc.

**Opening**

The facilitator greeted all the participants and observers, thanked them for coming and presented the proposed meeting goals, agenda and ground rules:

**Proposed Meeting Goals**

- To educate the participants about the Missouri River Ecosystem Restoration Plan (MRERP) Scoping Process
- To gather in-depth public input on key elements of the MRERP
- To foster dialogue and discussion among different communities of interest and place
- To improve the connection among the stakeholders and communities with the Missouri River

**Proposed Agenda**

**10:30-11:15 a.m.—Welcome, Introductions, Proposed Ground Rules and Agenda**

- Brief introductions – Name, organization and/or community and your single most important/significant connection to the Missouri River
- Proposed Ground Rules and Meeting Agenda

**11:15 a.m.-12:30 p.m.—Presentation and Q&A**

- Overview and purpose of MRERP process and use of your input in that process—Wayne Nelson-Stastny, USFWS Project Lead for MRERP

**12:30-12:45 p.m.—Break to get lunch** (available at meeting site for participants and observers)

**12:45 – 1:45 p.m.—Working Lunch**

**Personal and "Community" Values and Reasons for Those Values**

- Social and Cultural Values—What do you value most about and regard as the primary societal benefits of the Missouri River and its ecosystem—e.g., aesthetics, education, leisure, traditions, quality of life, attachment to place?

- Economic Values—What does/should the Missouri River and its ecosystem mean to the economy of your community, state, (and nation?)—e.g., reliance on it by farmers, business, industry; impact on standard of living, energy production and sustainability of the economy?

- Health and Security Values—What value does/should the Missouri River and its ecosystem have for lives of humans, animal and plant species—e.g., clean water, food, reduction in deaths (from flooding and drought), environmental sustainability?

- Ethical Values—What moral or ethical standards do you believe are essential to consider with regard to the Missouri River and ecosystem—e.g., sustaining all life, natural environment, human responsibility?

**1:45 – 2:30 p.m.—Your Vision for the Future of the Missouri River and Ecosystem**

What is your notion of "restoration" and what, then, is your vision for a "restored" Missouri River and ecosystem? What conditions and features would be present? How would it be different than it is today? In your vision, how would people connect to it differently?

**2:30–3:15 p.m.— Issues and Opportunities**

What do you believe are the issues/problems/obstacles that affect the Missouri River and its ecosystem now? What are the current opportunities that exist in relation to addressing those problems?

**3:15-4 p.m.—Moving Forward: Purpose and Need/Restoration Actions Discussion**

Consider the MRERP presentation and the current "purpose and need" statements. Based on what you have heard and your (potentially shared) values, issues/problems, opportunities and vision for the future of the Missouri River and ecosystem, what seems appropriate in current planning? What needs to be changed—e.g., what is not in there, may be going in the wrong direction, etc.?

**4:00 – 4:15—Input from Observers**

**4:15 – 4:30—Reflections and Closing Comments**

**Proposed Ground Rules**

1. **Everyone is Equal:** We agree that all participants in the meeting are equal.
2. **No Relevant Topic is Excluded:** We agree that no relevant topic is excluded from consideration. This is our opportunity to bring up and discuss issues that concern us relative to Missouri River ecosystem restoration.
3. **Respect Opinions:** We agree to respect each other's opinions. We will use gentle candor in comments to each other and will not interrupt.
4. **Respect the Time:** We all understand the time constraints we face in this meeting and agree to respect the time. No one will dominate the discussions, and all participants will have an opportunity to express their opinions.
5. **Keep the Facilitator Accurate:** We agree to make certain that the facilitator captures what we mean to say. We will keep the facilitator accurate.
6. **Media:** We agree that the meeting is open to the media and to the public.
7. **Cell Phones/Texting:** We agree to turn off electronic telecommunications devices during the meeting.
8. **Have Fun:** We agree to do our best to enjoy the process and to help other participants do so as well.

There were no suggestions for changes in the ground rules or the agenda.

**Introductions/Ties to the Missouri River—As participants introduced themselves, they also began to express their personal connections with the River, which began to define their values:**

1. I have a personal and professional connection to the River. I view the river as a friend and great escape that rejuvenates me.

2. My connection is also personal and professional. I have done a lot of professional work related to the River. My personal tie is one of the reasons I live in North Dakota. It is a resource beyond compare.

3. I have a cultural stake – the River has an ancient connection to our people, and I am here to give a voice to our people.

4. Our family began as homesteaders and settlers along the River. We were flooded out when the dam was built. Now, because of the dam, we have an opportunity to live on the River bottom.

5. I have real personal ties to the River, especially for its recreation and aesthetics.

6. I have a cultural and spiritual connection to this great River. Our peoples' relationship is historic, a relationship of thousands of years. We have great respect for the River and its power to give and to take life.

7. I was born and raised here. I caught my very first fish near this meeting room. The River is the first place that I went swimming.

8. I view the River as a place to recharge, rejuvenate and be inspired. It lifts me up. I use it professionally in teaching and educational settings across the whole gamut.

9. I am connected through my personal and professional life –as a state legislator and with the Ft. Abraham Lincoln Foundation, a place that also demonstrates the historical heritage of the Mandan people. We own and operate the Lewis and Clark River Boat. I am also involved in the ND Heritage Foundation whose goal is to enhance and protect the state's heritage, including the Missouri River.

10. In my job, I am concerned with the economic connections to the River. It supplies the needed water for economic growth, but it cannot be considered without regard to the rights of all the people. We need to be sure the rights of the people of North Dakota are not superseded by the downstream folks. The River is beautiful and valuable to all of us.

11. I have an obvious professional connection given my job at the ND Historical Society. I also have a personal connection. I fell in love with the River, its culture, history and beauty.

12. I grew up along the River in Bismarck. My perspective of the River has changed as I worked overseas and have seen other "wild" rivers of other countries, as well as those that are thoroughly controlled. These experiences have caused me to think about the River in a different way.

13. The River is a living being, and it means a lot to our people and me. I have childhood memories of going with my mother to feed and pray for the River. I have experienced how the River was taken from us and what has been taken from the river. I was always taught how to give back to the River. My great grandfather is in the Cowboy Hall of Fame and was a tribal chairman. I have been a tribal chairman. We are still fighting the same issues. I have a deep spiritual connection and a desire to replace what was/is taken from our people.

14. We have a family farm south of Mandan. My family homesteaded River bottomland. We have both the burden and privilege of caring for the River. I have childhood memories of my dad

parting the willows like a snowplow to go fishing when we were done with our chores. I hope to gain an insight regarding what to do with this opportunity and resource.

15. I have primarily a professional affiliation. I am a part of the Mississippi River Initiative and have gained a view of the River from a broader watershed perspective. What is done (or not done) in one area affects the river and the people all the way downstream. We need to respect it as a watershed with its far-reaching impact. I am not a ND native, but a spousal transplant. My transition to becoming a North Dakotan was positively impacted as I experienced the uniqueness of the River and found out how amazing it was.

16. I have lived on River most of my life. My brothers and I were the first to (water) ski on the River. I have concerns about the incredible increase in the use and abuse of the River. I get involved in the end of season River clean up, and it is mind-boggling to see how much (and what kind) of debris we take out of the river every year.

17. I grew up here. I have a personal, swimming, canoeing and Budweiser connection to the river. I love boating and fishing on the river.

18. North Dakota is not known as a state of many landmarks. But the Missouri River is a landmark and it certainly helps define us. It has great cultural significance, and this makes it important as a tourism attraction. It is a part of the economic development engine.

19. I was born and raised in Washburn and have a connection through the Lewis and Clark Foundation. I have been and continue to be cognizant of what the River means to so many. And I have worked with farmers, the energy industry and many others. As a result, I have tried to maintain a balanced approach by telling the many stories of the River.

20. I have a long-term connection to the River. I drilled my first several oil wells right on the River. I have family that live all along the river. My wife learned to sail on Lake Oahe, and I learned to sail on Lake Sakakawea. Over the years, it has been sad to watch so much deteriorate. It seems that most development activities are okay, but I think that the standards are not what they could be. I recreate on the River and am rejuvenated. I want to see what we can do to repair the broken system.

21. I grew up along a tributary of the Missouri, on the Cannonball River. Our family home was a favorite place for friends and relatives because of that River. I have also lived live in St Louis and experienced the “other end” of the River and its connection to the Mississippi, but I know the Missouri is the “real River.” I have lived in Idaho and had the opportunity to observe efforts/successes in the rejuvenation/rehabilitation of the river there and vibrant effects that has had on the entire state. We tend to divide reality into different categories, and we should recognize that history, culture and ecology all go together.

22. I grew up just west of here, and my major connection to the River was fishing. I recognize the need for the River, its respect and conservation, but we must understand that the water from the river provides a livelihood and drinking water for so many people. We need to lay claim to the water we need, or others will take it from us.

23. My County is integrally involved with the River, and I have dealt with many legal issues related to it. We are the recipients of other peoples' policies related to access and weed issues, cabin development and infrastructure and use issues. And it is a given, that living where I live, I use the River often for recreation and leisure.

24. Began with a tribal greeting. My Indian name means, "Mother Comes." The River teaches us how to live in a good way – "just the way that I am" it tells us. Our people have a deep, ancient connection to this living, sentient being. It has been here since the beginning of time--our River, our relative. It is holy, sacred and powerful. We need to develop a personal connection to the River. Our people have been forced to make tremendous sacrifices, have had to say good-by to our homeland when the Corps built the dams all the way to the Gulf of Mexico. We have had to fight to have our dead returned to us. Much has been taken from our valley and tributaries. We need to preserve and protect what is left, our cultural and sacred connections. We belong to this River, are children of the River and have suffered the losses and sacrifices so all of you can enjoy this River. I am in an unenviable position of having to say these things out loud. But, our values should matter, but our experience has been that we have to work our way to the table to be considered. I welcome the opportunity to be here and work together to build true partnerships. The Tribes have reserved water rights that need to be valued. We are involved in a process of get part of our homelands back and in other potentially contentious issues. We need to discuss them all in a peaceful way.

25. I have a personal and professional connection to the River. I grew up close to it and was even affected by this year's flood. When I was growing up in Washburn, there was a trash dump right by the River, people dumping in the River, and spoil piles there. We have cleaned those up. Water needs to be available for the lives of all the people, so we have to find better ways to deal with it. Business assets are connected, but we need to treat the River right and use it properly. We can drink the water, but not if it is oil.

26. I am a fisherman on lakes and rivers, and the quiet power of the River never ceases to amaze me.

27. I have had both professional and personal connections to the River, which go back to being a game warden 28 years ago and trying to enforce game laws, and I am simply a nature lover.

28. My personal use of the River includes a cabin in Pick City. We use it as a family. In Bismarck, the Park District manages public access in an urban setting, managing shoreline, and the River has a significant relationship to development. Demand for public access continues to grow.

29. I have been Involved all of my life farming on an upper tributary, the Pipestem Creek, and I have been involved with the River all my working life. We need to identify the best ways to get the most benefit from it. There is currently no plan for the River. I now represent irrigation interests, which obviously care about the supply of water available for irrigation and other uses.

30. I, too, have a personal and professional relationship to the River. I grew up next to the Sheyenne River and have been interested in rivers all my life--for recreation (boating, fishing and hunting). I believe we need to focus on how the Missouri River enhances our quality of life and place. We cannot separate the River from the quality of place.

**Presentation by Wayne Nelson-Stastny—The presentation was made available to all attendees in hard copy. Wayne presented a PowerPoint version, and the presentation was followed by questions and answers:**

Q: While this process is going on, who is dealing with current recovery activities?

A: Those activities are currently being done primarily by the Corps.

Q: Will there be an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) done following this process?

A: MRERP will be its own EIS.

Q: What about water quality, will that be a part of the plan? I did not see anything specific in your presentation related to water quality.

A: It will be addressed through the focus on natural resources, such as fish, so it will certainly be part of the plan.

Q: The Corps and USFWS regularly argue about "the science." How do you plan to resolve differences in the interpretation of the science?

A: Part of the effort will include an external peer review processes. We need to be sure we get "independent" external peer review.

Q: What is the geographic scope of MRERP? How far up on the flood plain will it extend?

A: That has not been completely decided. It is not clarified yet. But it may end up including tributaries and watersheds. I know that is a fuzzy answer, but we will let the science help take us there as we go through the process.

Q: Where is adequate water supply being addressed?

A: That will come into the portions of the planning process that deal with restoration to include ensuring adequate water supplies.

Q: As you noted, you are already behind on the timing of this plan. You are not even into phase 2. How long will this take and how will it fit with other efforts like the MRAPS study just beginning tomorrow? How can water supply issues be addressed in the meantime?

A: There are numerous efforts going on in the basin, now to include MRAPS and reopening of the '44 flood control study/act. We are not sure how MRERP relates to that, but obviously there will be many opportunities to give public input, including on water supply issues. And we will try to integrate all of the input being received as part of our planning process.

**Values—Participants discussed the values they hold with regard to the Missouri River. While the following summary attempts to deal with those values in discreet categories, values are not discreet or exclusive and may fall better into different categories. Participants also identified at least two additional categories, including "political values" and "values of biological systems."**

**Social and Cultural Values**

- Historically, we have had difficulty placing economic value on natural resources, aesthetics and other social and cultural values.
- We need to learn to respect and value the River simply as a river. We need to listen to Native voices in speaking of it in more reverential terms. It gives a much different perspective.
- There are River connections to irreplaceable social and cultural places, such as ancestral burial places.
- The River is "the quality of life" for Bismarck and the other communities through which it flows and is a public resource, which should not be protected for just the privileged few.
- We need to consider and plan for mitigation of the negative impacts (cultural and social) that restoration will cause.
- Replantation of the Cottonwoods and other timber on the River bottomlands should be a priority.
- We need to have care and concern for posterity, for future generations and the need for public land available for all time. What do our grandchildren want us to do?
- Aesthetics and natural beauty have a great value that probably cannot be put in economic terms.
- We need to keep the River's interest in mind, as a resource, not a commodity.
- People need to have access to the river/resource, or they will not value it. Building of "McMansions" on the River limit that access.
- We need to think in terms of a "River Community" that keeps the interests of the whole community in mind—e.g., consider the Rhine River and Black Forest in Europe.
- The River has an intrinsic value when all the parts are healthy, so we should avoid dissecting the various parts of the River.

**Economic Values**

- All other values need to be considered in the context of the economic value because, without the economic value of the River, there will be no funding available to achieve the other values.

- But we have been too tolerant of economic activities that have been only marginally beneficial. We need to have a higher bar for economic values and significant projects that produces real, sustained economic growth for all, not just the few, and that minimize environmental impacts or even enhance the environment.
- The price tag on the whole ecosystem's value is immeasurable in economic terms. How do you measure the economic value of nature?
- We need to make certain that we address sustainability as we do restoration and move in steps, not major projects.
- Yes, we need to be cautious about how we do new things, think in historical terms so that we do not simply repeat mistakes of the past. Fifty years from now, we do not want to have to look back and say what a mistake that was. We should not repeat old mistakes.
- What is measurable about the River in economic terms, and how would you count it otherwise?
- We have to deal with reality, what we have now. The facts of the River as it is today must be dealt with—e.g., agricultural, energy and recreational uses.
- We need to be realistic. Economics will drive decisions.
- While that may be true, independent scientific peer review is important and should take place early and throughout the process.
- The River has a history of trade and commerce, which we need to recognize.
- We need to consider what is our responsibility to our neighbors, both upstream/downstream.
- There needs to be a cultural shift—just economics is a "red-herring." There is so much more to the River.
- In that context, we need to think in new ways about how we can use enhancing the environment/ecosystem and make economic gains. They are not mutually exclusive. People need to be educated to think in such new ways.

**Health and Security Values**

- I consider litter along the River as a desecration of it. We need to have a sense of social consciousness and conscience that overlaps all value categories on behalf of "The River."
- The River is sick, and the evidence is that all water needs to be treated before we can drink it.
- But I believe it is dying, not just sick. And will the 2002 national resource study that indicates that the river is dying be used? There have been many studies that have been conducted for many reasons. How will these be considered and integrated into the plan? There are so many factors that should be considered.
- While there may be a need for balance and fairness in all value considerations, some values should be higher than others, such as those related to having safe drinking water. Without that, what else do we have?
- We need to consider long-term projections for climate change and having a likely drier climate and less water and to be prepared to deal with that.
- Simply knowing that we have a healthy River system is a value. The River is a living, pulsating organism that we value.
- Consider what happens when the River waxes and wanes – flood and drought – and the impact on people.

- A quote something like, “Nature will shake us off like a bad case of fleas” to illustrate that the dams will not be here forever, and we need to think about and prepare for that. Will the dams simply be rebuilt, or are there other options?
- We need to deal with sediment and siltation in ways that address the kinds of chemicals that are in them. And what happens, for example, if the leach pits in MT, filled with cyanide and other chemicals, leach into the River?

**Ethical Values**

- Why did studies like this not happen before the dams were built?
- The River is a sacred resource, and if others say there is nothing that we can do about what has been done to it, how can we correct the mistakes?
- We need to restore respect for the River.
- There will need to be trade-offs. What are we willing to give to get something else we prefer?
- Animal and plant species have value without regard to their economic value.
- We do not currently have a River. It is simply a managed system. A River, as a natural, dynamic constantly changing system, and, in its best functioning condition, that is what we should be striving for.
- Balance is important, but there must be priorities—e.g., having heavy metals in our drinking water. As noted previously, not all values are equal.

**Political Values**

- All of this discussion is taking place in a huge political context. We need to be aware of that and recognize “political values.”
- There continue to be discussions about the transfer of Missouri River water to the Red River, which will produce national and international problems as well as justice issues relative to local folks not having their human needs met. So the eastern-western ND and Minnesota and Manitoba concerns relative to biota transfers need to be part of the equation.
- How much “say” do we actually have – will our input here actually do something for the River?
- We need some way to help deal with private landowners and the issue of private property rights. It relates to the question of just how broad is the Missouri River corridor that we are planning about.
- The River should be recognized and treated by local, state and federal politicians as a public resource.
- We need to ensure the sustainability of the River. If we put things in place to keep it sustainable through this planning process and implementation to create a healthy and sustainable River, it should then be protected from changing political tides.
- We need to stress the educational aspects of these kinds of discussions and engage more of the public in these conversations. We need public support and enthusiasm to move the political process forward and maintain it, and there are funds available to do the necessary education in order to get the public educated and involved.

- We need to develop the political strength and commitment to do what must be done to restore the River.
- We need to take a new look at development of regulations to attain and maintain sustainability.
- We need to integrate and coordinate all of these current planning efforts and resources and move to action, perhaps by first focusing on "low hanging fruit" and spending funds for more easily solvable issues.

**Biological Functions/Natural Systems Values**

- Where do the natural, basic, fundamental, biological functions of the River ecosystem belong in this set of values?
- We need to determine benchmarks for defining a "healthy river" (suggestion was to simply define a "river")—a river's function is to do what a river does, not as controlled but as a dynamic system that sometimes floods and sometimes grows dry.
- "Permanent nesting islands" in the context of a dynamic, changing ecosystem, are an oxymoron.

**Overarching Values/Other Considerations**

- Educational, informational and interpretation needs are tremendous. People do not know what the issues may be and, therefore, have no idea about how to help.
- In developing this plan, we need to incorporate a "best practices" approach—this has been done by others in other states and countries. We need to emulate other successes.
- We need some idea as to the long-term projection of what will happen if we take certain actions.
- We need to manage the river as a whole, not based on the lowest level house on the flood plain.
- We need to consider the River under extreme conditions, including drought and floods, not simply under normal conditions.
- All local, state and federal agencies need to work together, to coordinate to implement the plan.

**Vision of a Restored Missouri River Ecosystem**

**What does "Restored" mean to you?**

- It means trying to recover by correcting where we have made mistakes.
- Let's remember that it would have been better not to have made many of the mistakes in the first place – let's not now make mistakes that will lead to future problems.
- Bringing back natural animal and plant species—cottonwoods, eagles, sturgeons, plovers, etc.—and bringing back public access, good water quality, dark skies and a dynamic river.
- We need to address the way that people think and talk about things—e.g., the "meaning of meaning." Native American thinking is different from "western thinking," which sees the parts of a whole. Natives think in terms of the whole and tell stories about how all things fit together in a universal context. All is part of the stars and the universe. The "People of the Earth" have always thought that way. In moving forward, then, and thinking about restoration, we must develop a deep relationship with the Native peoples, making them long-term partners in this process. We must marry western science to the universal consciousness of Native peoples, and that will heal the River.

- We must restore our values of concern for and fairness to all. We cannot consider only a physical restoration of the River. It has far more dimensions, including valuing and accepting the perspectives of Native peoples.
- While long-term cultural changes may be necessary, we operate from a more utilitarian perspective. We need to realize that rivers are vibrant corridors of commercial activity. And we need to think of restoration as creating greater amenities—for relaxation, recreation, leisure. Today's economy depends on human resources, and people are drawn to beautiful places. We need to make the economic case for ecological restoration.
- How will these kinds of ecological components/restorations be paid for? Where will the funds come from to pay for these changes? As it is now, there is basic unfairness with regard to people trying to be responsible, good stewards. While we self-ordained stewards have been doing our part, with economic stresses, that is very difficult. Will other sectors of society help contribute to those who are good stewards now and in the future?
- That is an essential part of "heritage tourism"—"fair restoration" that gives the economic justification to do what we do or want to do anyway. There always needs to be collective community support for good stewardship and restoration.
- Water quality and quantity are the key elements. Without them, nothing else matters.
- The core question is "Restore from when/what to where/what?" We cannot go back to the River in its original form. Economics will drive whatever happens. Somewhere, there becomes a necessity to cross the cultures and agree upon what we are trying to get back to.
- We must identify what we want from restoration. We need to mix restoration with net change and sustainability. I believe we will be lucky to keep what we have now. We need to restore what we can, but, what is more important is how do we stop further degradation?
- Restoration is in restoring our relationship, the relationship of humans to the River. We must "humble up" and acknowledge that relationship. That will help to focus on the issue. Restoration means restoring respect, not fouling the River, not having to go without water, not having to treat water for consumption. And we cannot view only one section of the river. The full watershed and all tributaries and all impacts need to be considered.
- Restoration is ensuring a natural way to move/remove sediments and be certain that an adequate amount of water flows along the entire system.

**Elements of a vision for a restored MRES—Participants were asked, if they were to develop a vision statement for the future of a restored Missouri River Ecosystem, what elements would be essential to include in that vision statement:**

- Education and Interpretation – tell the story of and educate people about the River
- Thriving fish and wildlife
- Equitable use of the water
- Potable water
- Public access
- Societal value placed on open, non-developed space
- Large tracts of land in public holding – reduction in private holdings on the River's banks
- A well-developed and fully-funded restoration plan
- Include tribal management within the plan
- Cottonwood regeneration

- Viable, sustained, diverse biological and riparian habitat
- Return/reintroduction of native medicines and fruits and vegetables
- Barrier islands in the south Mississippi are able to restore themselves
- Proactive and creative approach to doing what we can with what we have—e.g., the Lower Brule, SD efforts as an example: reintroduction of buffalo, black ferrets, elk, eagles, and other species; greater emphasis on maintaining historic/holy places
- More perpetual easements for historic, conservation and other purposes along the River
- Recognition and support/incentives for best management practices by private landowners along the River, including their providing more public access
- Recognize the existing amenities and facilities that have been developed over the past 50 years.
- Recognize that the Missouri River is a cultural heritage to all of the US – whatever the costs of restoring and maintaining the river should, therefore, be shared by the entire country.

**Obstacles and Problems—Participants were asked to identify the obstacles/issues and problems to achieving their vision and values for a restored Missouri River:**

- Current emphasis by the Corps on flood management/mitigation policies. We must change those policies and approaches.
- ND is unique in that its laws prevent the very things that would be part of the solutions—e.g., related to perpetual easements and acquiring private land for public access.
- Values have been placed on the wrong things – focused on economics and directed by politics—e.g., to provide flood control and electricity.
- Different cultural/social perspectives—e.g., between tribes and the Corps and among many of us, so we have no unified set of values and visions.
- Ignorance and greed.
- Too much politics, mismanagement, lack of funding, lack of hearing the voices of all the people, bureaucracy and inertia (the Corps is a victim of its own policies, resulting in inertia).
- Lack of an agreed upon point of departure – where are we going to start in terms of restoration?
- (Maybe the point of departure is that we can at least assume we can remove 1 or 2 dams and manage the others differently.)
- Or, if dams are not sustainable, prepare for alternatives when they are gone (but participants commented that the dams that have been built throughout history have often lasted much longer than anticipated).
- A participant noted that, when Steven Ambrose, author of "Undaunted Courage," was asked what to do with the Missouri and responded, "Drain all the dams," everyone flocked out of the room.
- Why not 2009 or 2016 (when the study is done?) as points of departure?
- (Maybe we should do a study about where we would be if we did not have the Corps.)
- Most of the available area on which to accomplish "restoration" is in private hands because most of the other areas are already managed by the Corps
- Barge traffic is subsidized on the lower reaches of the River.
- The Red River communities' water needs.
- Inadequate funding for preservation of public lands we currently have.
- The lack of understanding of the River as a natural system and that individual acts have cumulative, often negative effects on it—the lack of individual stewardship.

- The Government and Corps can do what they want within limited boundaries. The main thing driving all issues is the Flood Control Act of 1944. We need a new, updated, contemporary flood control act. Nothing can happen until that is done.
- There is no institutional memory of the obligations as a result of promises made to the upper basin states. Too many people in authority do not remember what was promised. The federal government has not fulfilled its obligations. (A literature search should be done to identify all of those unmet promises.)
- Lower basin states (Missouri in particular) is fighting change all the way.
- A huge obstacle is trying to make any changes in the Corps operations. Politics and bureaucrats dominate. Constituencies are not adequately represented.
- The Corps' budget is 220 pages long and detailed with regard to the lower basin states. Everything is itemized. Little is itemized in the Corps' budget for the upper basin states. That sends the message to congress that all the needs are in the southern part of the basin. Currently, needs in the upper basin states are only met by attaching special riders to the budget, as submitted by our congressional delegation. Specific funding is needed in the upper basin states to address weed control, recreation and a host of other needs.

**Opportunities—Participants were asked what opportunities currently exist to help make changes, to accomplish the kind of restoration participants are seeking:**

- To utilize the Northern Plains National Heritage Area funding to address heritage projects. Such funding may be a carrot or lure to promote the area, and that funding does not come with regulatory control.
- To gain state and federal funding to develop conservation reserve enhancement programs (CREP) along the Missouri.
- To gain greater control of use of agricultural chemicals adjacent to the River—e.g., potential USDA funding.
- To add a greater educational component to the plan that will provide an opportunity to interpret and share the story and broaden the discussion of the River.
- To create a paradigm shift in the way we relate to the River and force the Corps into developing viable, true partnerships with those who live along the River.
- To get funding that addresses the obligations/promises that were made to the upper basin states in return for land taken for the dams.
- To start educating in a way that creates partnerships, relationships, and networks to amplify the voice of the people to help move the process forward.
- To change the Flood Control Act of 1944.
- To have the Corps create a system of permanent easements (to address those problems with regard to current ND state laws).
- To gain funding through the Corps for the necessary projects and changes.
- To research opportunities to utilize Higher Education—e.g., water quality studies, natural resource studies, history, watershed, communities, impacts, etc.
- To get the Corps out of its schizophrenic restoration versus flood control modes and reconcile what are often conflicting policies.
- To create a new management system that includes contract opportunities for local businesses, tribes, and organizations.

- To make the Corps responsible and responsive to the people. They are not good plumbers and they act like the Soviet Polit Bureau, answering to no one.
- To come to agreement on our own values so that the plan can move ahead with broad public support.
- To adequately fund and effectively utilize Municipal Rural & Industrial Initiative funds.
- To rethink the word, "restoration," because it is a misnomer and needs to be reconsidered. This plan is about different management and not about restoration.
- To change the way that the Corps does business in terms of its management and relationships. It is an opportunity to draw a line in the sand—i.e., to drop the baggage from the past—to look and move forward to get better outcomes for the River, which will be better outcomes for all that live on the River, both up and down stream.
- To utilize the clout of the ND Congressional delegation to help make the changes needed.
- To address individual landownership and incentivize approaches that will be necessary to implement the plan.
- To begin a common advocacy and commitment that lends itself to changes in public policy.
- To rethink unrealistic water projects in ND and develop a better master plan for the state's water issues.

**Take-Aways—Participants were asked to summarize and prioritize some of the more significant "take-aways" from the meeting, but to do so in such a way as not to diminish what had already been discussed. As prioritized, those were:**

1. To re-evaluate the Pick-Sloan Flood Control Act of 1944 involving the Corps and Congress directly from the beginning.
2. To ensure that basic needs—e.g., potable water for all—are met.
3. To address the fact that the Corps is part of the problem, and they need to know that they are part of the problem, and to address the Corps' ineffectiveness and mismanagement that has negatively affected everyone.
4. To recognize that the current state of the Missouri River is unacceptable and needs to change.
5. To revise the master manual – otherwise nothing will change.
6. To ensure enhanced water quality to address health issues, working with EPA and addressing multiple chemical issues related to water treatment (as well as removing chemicals that are already in the water).
7. To ensure more variability and dynamism in the River, especially to address siltation and endangered species issues.
8. To let everyone know that we highly value the Missouri River ecosystem and resources, and we want to preserve, protect and restore those resources wherever possible.
9. To recognize that the River is far more than just the "nuts and bolts" economic issues. Its value is difficult to quantify economically, but there is a lot of "psychic income" from the River.
10. To elevate the status of and utilize collaborative processes more and to involve the public in order to develop a consistent system of values.
11. To change the way we view and relate to the River.
12. To build on the fact that ND is still not fully developed, that there are good options available.
13. To include and incorporate/coordinate all efforts and initiatives so that positive actions are not negated by other conflicting actions—avoid the "circular firing squad syndrome."

14. To ensure that the Missouri River is regarded as a national resource, with a national focus, involvement and support and ensure fair treatment for upper and lower basin states.
15. To ensure that, if the Corps gets the planning process done and funded, they are more assertive in carrying the plan forward.
16. To plan for how we get congressional approval of changes we can come to agreement on.
17. The final report or summary of this meeting should be submitted as part of the public input part and should be filed with MRRIC to become part of the public record.
18. To ensure that all of the various planning processes currently going on are integrated.
19. To gain the irrigation acres promised.
20. To use a one-state/one vote approach analogous to the Senate (not the House).
21. To enhance cooperation with upper basin states and understand that water belongs to all of the people. To live with and value what we have.

**Comments from Observers—Those who had observed all or part of the meeting were asked for their comments:**

One observer commented:

- The Missouri River is very important to me.
- We need a greater focus on the entire Missouri River ecosystem, not just upper or lower basin, but the whole system.
- Riparian areas and cottonwoods need to be restored.
- We should be removing riprap and restoring channels. Much of the riprap is simply a band-aid approach.
- We need to address the endangered species.
- I am very concerned about water quality issues.
- We do not need more bank stabilization because, eventually, it will make the Missouri a totally channelized River.
- Homes are being built far too close to the River.
- We need to protect our cultural and historic sites along the River.
- We need to let the River naturally create its own sandbars.
- The master manual clearly needs revision—during the previous effort, the Corps simply changed the science to conform to the changes it wanted in the master manual.
- I have concerns about inter-basin water transfers and the potential negative impacts in other basins.
- We need more public lands along the Missouri with increased public access—by purchases from willing sellers.
- We need more habitat protection for all species.
- We need to understand that flooding is natural and a necessity.

Another observer commented:

- I began simply as a fisherman on the Missouri but am now very involved in Missouri River issues, including as a representative on MRRIC.

- It is ironic that it has taken an invitation by the Corps and USFWS to bring this kind of group together. We need to act like this is our River, we need more civic engagement meetings like this. I have heard and will take your thoughts to the MRRIC meetings.

A third observer commented:

- I like many others in my area lost a great deal of land to the Oahe Reservoir.
- I have directly negotiated with the Corps for 8 years. It is an extremely difficult process. The Corps policies must change to provide for improvements about how we are allowed to use the lands and to allow us to improve our lands. Their policies have changed but primarily in negative ways. 90% of the lands around Oahe are agricultural. We support the wildlife, the habitat, etc. but get nothing in return. Yet there is little agricultural representation in Corps policy making. We are not enemies of the River.
- Laws must be updated as well to accommodate new uses.
- These study processes are taking far too long. I will be dead before anything is implemented. Actions must be taken sooner than 5 or more years from now.

**Additional Comments from Surveys: Three surveys were turned in to the facilitator. We have tried to go through them to distill comments that were not already in the above comments. They included:**

- Agricultural runoff needs to be addressed.
- Cottonwoods are not really a desirable species anymore.
- Barriers to improvement include: too many special interests, almost non-existent downstream barge traffic.
- Restoration may be impossible except in small pockets or pollution reduction.
- Long term, the dams have to go, and the lowlands near the River need to be vacated.
- The River fosters a diverse recreation and energy industry that allows McLean County to continue its agricultural base.
- Under current law, any “fixes” will simply be band-aids. When we go through lower water cycles, the priority of unsound water uses destroys any efforts to repair the ecosystems done under normal conditions.
- You cannot eliminate any natural resources when considering the health of the River ecosystem.
- Restoration means stability, in species, economies and water uses.
- We need to promote “smart growth” along the River to maintain vistas and access while at the same time respecting landowner rights. We need to stabilize and mitigate significant archaeological sites that are eroding into the River prior to being mostly destroyed. We need to ensure that one resource is not pitted against another.
- Restoration means a healthy River, not polluted, and with habitats for wildlife, access for the public, and stabilized banks.

**Concluding Comments/Reflections of Participants**

- I appreciated the sincere thoughts and ideas. The civility I experienced is a testament to ND nice. I was surprised by what I heard in terms of the level of agreement among such a diverse group. I hope the Corps and all of us take advantage of the information generated here today.
- I just hope we can proceed and get some real benefits out of today.

- I was impressed by all the articulation of values and how people understand and appreciate the River and the focus on preservation, and I hope we move ahead with feasible actions.
- I appreciated the opportunity to participate. We need to continue this dialogue locally. There has not been much talk about the River. We need to engage all of our citizens.
- Thanks for the opportunity. It was very educational for me.
- I appreciated being here. Much of what I learned was eye opening, and I enjoyed the fellowship and learned a lot.
- Thanks for the invitation and the opportunity to give and receive input. I learned a lot. Thanks for the hard work. I want to see it continue. We do not have to accept the status quo.
- Thanks.
- Thanks, glad to be here and learned a lot.
- Thank to Dick for the hard work. I was happy to see a high level of consensus.
- I, too, feel there was a high level of consensus and was surprised in that we came here from so many different backgrounds and perspectives.
- I know how much time and effort went into this meeting. I was excited to listen to everyone, and it was nice to see the awareness of the ecosystem.
- This meeting was much more interesting than I anticipated. "Death to all litterers!"
- I was really glad to be a part of this meeting.
- Thanks to the Consensus Council. There is less daylight between positions than I expected.
- I enjoyed the diverse perspectives and ideas.
- Thank you for the invitation. It has been an interesting meeting, clearly not one of shared ignorance. I learned a lot.
- I hope we come away with a plan and realization that we will have to push for funds and the political will to get it done.
- Thanks. Please recycle all of the leftovers.
- Thanks. Being from the eastern part of state, I found this interesting, and I am happy I don't work for the Corps.
- Thanks. I was encouraged to hear that others are concerned about tribal people and issues.
- Thanks for the invitation and hard work you put in.
- A lot of good things have been said. Don't let it end here.
- Thank you.
- Good work, as always. I agree that this group should stay together and keep working. The Corps is often simply doing what Congress wants.
- I leave here optimistic. This was a great collaborative process. We need to get after it and keep processes like this going.

## APPENDIX D: Newspaper Advertisement

The Bismarck Tribune
www.bismarcktribune.com
The Finder

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Customer: 60026929
Phone: (701) 224-0588
Date: 09/18/2009

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Amount Paid: _____ CK #: _____

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*Credit card u*

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 09/16/09 | 09/16/09 | 1 | Classified ad<br>Bismarck Tribune | 68.00 | 02.00 | 102.00 |

Affidavit of Publication
State of North Dakota ) SS County of Burleigh
Before me, a Notary Public for the State of North Dakota personally appeared _____ who being duly sworn, deposes and says that he (she) is the Clerk of Bismarck Tribune Co., and that the publication(s) were made through the Bismarck Tribune on the following dates: 9/16. Signed _____ sworn and subscribed to before me this 24th day of September 20 09
_____
Notary Public in and for the State of North Dakota

MORGAN DOLL
Notary Public
State of North Dakota
My Commission Expires Jan. 12, 2011

**U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS NOTICE OF FOCUS GROUP MEETING**

**The U.S. Army Corps** of Engineers (USACE), in partnership with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), is initiating a collaborative long-term study authorized by the Water Resources Development Act of 2007. The name of this study is the Missouri River Ecosystem Restoration Plan and Environmental Impact Statement (MRERP EIS). The result will be a fully integrated plan and environmental impact statement (EIS), prepared following National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and USACE planning guidance. Once completed, the MRERP will result in a policy/programmatic-level plan that will determine and describe high-level priorities and criteria for projects that address mitigation, recovery, and restoration of the Missouri River.

**The USACE** will hold focus group meetings for the MRERP EIS in locations throughout the Missouri River Basin to describe the project and the planning process, and to solicit input on the project scope, purpose and need, issues, and other related matters.

**One of the focus group** meetings will be held on Wednesday, September 30, 2009 from 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. in Bismarck, North Dakota. This focus group meeting will include a group of active participants accompanied by a group of observers. This focus group activity is an exercise to trigger both active participants and observers to consider key scoping elements and hear different viewpoints. Participants for the focus groups have been identified and will reflect a diverse range of communities and interests in the basin. This focus group meeting is also open to observers. Although observers will not actively participate in the exercise, they will have an opportunity to provide input on the content and process they observed. Obtaining input from active participants as well as observers is a central purpose of these meetings. Space is limited. To reserve your space as an observer or for additional information about this focus group meeting, please send an **email to shelly@agree.org or call Shelly at 701-224-0588, ext. 100 by Friday, September 25.**

**Information** pertaining to scoping and the overall project can be found on the web at www.mrerp.org. Written comments for scoping will be accepted until December 1, 2009.

**Questions and comments** specific to the project and EIS should be addressed to:
Jennifer Switzer
Project Manager
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
601 E. 12th Street
Kansas City, MO 64106
**Email Address to Submit Comments: comments@mrerp.org**
9/16 - 604529

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**MRERP Civic Engagement Meetings Fall 2009**

**Final Report**

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# Attachment J

## Missouri Report

**Consensus**
"We put the *public* in public policy"

PO Box 10252
Kansas City, MO 64171
816.531.5078
816.531.4507 (event RSVPs)
www.consensuskc.org
jenwilding@consensuskc.org

# Missouri: Missouri River basin ecosystem restoration meeting report

## 1. Introduction

On October 2nd, Consensus convened 30 participants and eight observers at the Capitol Plaza Hotel in Jefferson City to discuss how best to restore the Missouri River basin ecosystem. The meeting was one of eight held in states within the river basin during September and October of 2009.

Consensus recruited individuals from nine of ten stakeholder groups suggested by the U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution. They (and the number of participants) included: navigation (3); fish and wildlife (1); recreation (3); agriculture (6); business and chambers of commerce (4); culture and historic preservation (5); communities and local governments that depend on the river for water and power (3); environmental and conservation (2); and people who live on the river (2). The tenth stakeholder group was American Indian tribes, of which there are none in the state of Missouri. See Appendix A for names of and contact information for participants.

## 2. Methodology

This section describes how Consensus recruited participants and how it structured the meeting.

### 2.a. Methodology – participant recruitment

Consensus identified respected organizations in each of the nine stakeholder groups and asked them to recommend participants. This methodology allowed us to use the influence of a respected leader as a hook to encourage individuals to attend. It also allowed us to gather participants that leaders in each stakeholder group would agree would fairly reflect the group's perspective, which increased legitimacy and assured that the strongest proponents of a point of view were talking with other people at that level.

The participant names and affiliations, along with names of individuals who canceled or declined, and those who recommended participants, are below. Recommendations were also provided by CAT and MRRIC members.

| # in group | Participant |
|---|---|
| **Navigation** | |
| 1 | Ray Bohlken, Capital Sand |
| 2 | Chris Gutierrez, president, KC SmartPort |
| 3 | Vince Gauthier, director, Kansas City Port Authority |
| Canceled: Jesse Lybarger, tugboat pilot; Bill Jackson, Brunswick River Terminal. | |
| Recommendations provided by: John LaRandeau (Army Corps), Lester Cruse (dispatcher for asphalt boats), Joe LaMothe (Midwest Terminal Warehouse), Steve Johnston (St. Joe Regional Port Authority). | |
| **Fish & Wildlife** | |
| 1 | Norman Stucky – retired employee of the Department of Conservation. Spend most of career in Nebraska. Last 7 years in MO. |
| Canceled: David Stous, Missouri River Relief board member and Mitch Leachman, director, St. Louis Audubon Society. Declined: Jeff Barrow (Mo River Relief), Steve Mellis, David Urich, Mike Leach, Jane Frazier and the entire mid-Missouri Audubon Society membership. One person said he would rather go fishing than talk about going fishing, and it was hard to argue with that. | |
| Recommendations provided by: Dave Murphy (MO Conservation Federation), Jeff Barrow, David Thorne at MO Department of Conservation, Steve Schnarr from MO River Relief. | |
| **Recreation (boating, fishing, hunting, ecotourism)** | |
| 1 | Scott Mansker. President, Missouri River 340. |
| 2 | Mike Cooper. Owner, Cooper's Landing. |
| 3 | Brett Dufur, owner, Mighty MO Canoe Rentals and author of Katy Trail guidebook. |
| Canceled: Adam Wolf, owner, Tombstone Tackle. Recommendations provided by Steve Johnson at MO River Communities Network and Tom with U.S. Fish and Wildlife, who called out of the blue. Several attempts to get recommendations from MO Dept of Natural Resources failed. | |
| **Agriculture** | |
| 1 | Terry Hilgedick, farmer, Hartsburg MO. On MO Corn Growers Association Board. |
| 2 | Jay Fischer, farmer and agritainment business owner |
| 3 | Peggy Smart, farmer and runs grain elevator and ag input sales |
| 4 | Rob Korff, on MCGA board and vice chair of MO corn Merchandising Council |
| 5 | Rusty Lee, farmer in Truxton, MO |
| 6 | Tom Waters, farmer and chair of the MO Levee and Drainage District |
| Declined or unable to reach: Ron McNeal, Bob Perry, Bill Jackson, Ron Hardecke, farmers. | |
| Recommendations provided by: Gary Marshall, MO Corn Growers Association; Steve Taylor, Missouri Agribusiness Association; and David Baker, Missouri Extension. AgriMissouri folks | |

| | |
|---|---|
| were unable to assist due to MO State Fair. Farm Bureau Federation said they would have someone call, but the call was not received. | |
| **Business / Chambers of Commerce** | |
| 1 | Todd White, owner, Katy Bike Rental and Robin's Nest, and president of the Defiance Merchant Association |
| 2 | Kendall Kircher, board member, MFA Incorporated |
| 3 | Lisa McClary, owner, MO River Monument Co., and on staff with Boonville Tourism Dept. |
| 4 | Jeffery Hartle, Park University instructor |
| Canceled: Larry Miskel, mayor of Hermann and owner of B&B. Declined: Linda Hunter with Katy Depot. | |
| Recommendations provided by: Maria Dorsey, Katy Trail Merchants & Communities; director, Hermann Chamber of Commerce; Park University. Multiple attempts to get recommendations from the MO Chamber of Commerce were unsuccessful. Parkville and Chesterfield chambers were invited to provide recommendations, but did not. | |
| **Cultural & Historic Preservation** | |
| 1 | Tom Dunn, owner, Gateway Arch Riverboats |
| 2 | Nancy Grant, mayor of Hartsburg and creator of Lewis & Clark event (Nancy was sick and sent her husband in her place.) |
| 3 | Art Mehrhoff, University of Missouri Museum of Art & Archaeology |
| 4 | Kathryn Frazier, chair, historic preservation commission, Augusta, MO |
| 5 | Roger Slusher, volunteer, Lexington Historic Preservation Commission |
| Declined: Dave Hawley (Steamboat Arabia Museum), Greg Olson (MO Archives in Sec'y of State's Office), Doris Keeven-Franke (Washington, MO, Historical Society), Mary Ellen McVicker (Friends of Boonville), Sharon Dyer (art professor), Meredith Ludwig (oral histories), Robyn Burnett (author and speaker), Dr. David Knox (Lindenwood College), Lois Mueller (Robller Winery), Ryan Graham (St. Charles historian), Kathy Borgman (Friends of Arrow Rock), Rich Lawson (Friends of Arrow Rock), Bob Heggestad (Lexington Historic Preservation Commission). Most declined due to events the weekend of 10/2-4. | |
| Recommendations provided by: Patricia at MO Humanities Council, Mary Ellen McVicker, Steve Johnson with MO River Communities Network, Susan Jezak Ford, architectural historian, and Tiffany Patterson, State Historic Preservation Office. | |
| **Communities and Local Governments (that depend on the MO River for water, water quality or power)** | |
| 1 | Cindy Hebenstreit, American Water. |
| 2 | John Bremser, assistant plant manager of maintenance, Kansas City, MO, Water Services Department |
| 3 | Gabe Craighead, commissioner, Callaway County |
| Declined: Paul Ling (environmental manager, KCP&L). | |
| | |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Environmental and Conservation** | |
| 1 | Jim Karpowicz, founder and current board member, Missouri River Relief |
| 2 | Tom Ball, river educator and AmeriCorps volunteer |
| Canceled: Sarah Pennington, Missouri River Communities Network and Friends of the Big Muddy; Susan Wiegand, business owner and MO River boater. Declined: Larry Ruff (Greenway Network), Laura Cohen (Confluence Partnership in the St. Louis area), John McPheeters (Nature Conservancy), and Greg Poleski (kayaker and conservationist).<br>Recommendations provided by: Steve Schnarr, MO River Relief, and Laura Cohen, Confluence Partnership. Requested recommendations from the Sierra Club Missouri Chapter, which emailed the info to members. Nobody responded. | |
| **People Who Live on the River** | |
| 1 | Edward Catron. Has a house on the river, 11 acres and a truck garden. Has boated on the river all his life. |
| 2 | John Wood. St. Joseph area. |
| Recommendations provided by Steve Johnston, director, Community Alliance of Saint Joseph. | |

The letter we sent to organizations we wanted to recommend participants is contained in Appendix B. The letter we sent to the group of participants, after most had been confirmed, is contained in Appendix C.

Thirty individuals attended the meeting of more than 66 individuals who were invited. The general public was invited to observe the meeting via placement of a legal ad in the Columbia Daily Tribune on September 18, 2009. In addition, we sent the legal ad to all MRRIC and CAT members from Missouri, with the invitation to let others know that they would be welcome to observe.

### 2.b. Methodology – meeting design

Consensus designed the meeting to encourage the diverse group of stakeholders to be responsible for generating and analyzing information and, as much as possible, to identify areas of common ground.

Values: Group interview process. The room set-up was groups of four chairs facing four chairs. Each chair held a small notepad and an index card containing one of four questions. In increments of four minutes, a participant interviewed and was interviewed by his/her partner. Eventually, everyone in the group had asked and answered all four questions.

The four questions were: #1 – What is your interest in and connection to the Missouri River? #2 – What do you need from the Missouri River and are your needs being met? What benefits do you receive from the river? #3 – What does the Missouri River mean to your community? How has the river shaped the culture of your community? #4 – What does the Missouri River mean to the economic vitality and sustainability of your community and state?

After that, individuals responsible for each question worked together in groups of six to eight to analyze the responses, then reported out to the large group. They were asked to report the following: What they heard, like the common themes and range of

responses, what they thought was surprising and what they thought was especially important. Two of the small groups were facilitated by a participant and observed by a member of the Consensus team, and two were facilitated by a U.S. Institute staff member.

Future scenarios / Visioning: Small group discussion. Seated in their small groups of six to eight, participants were read a brief "visioning" statement, then asked to write their personal visions on a worksheet. They were asked to share their personal visions with their small group members, then asked to prepare a report to the large group that answered these questions: 1. What would a common vision include, if it included everything that your group agreed was important? How would the river be different from the way it is today? What conditions or features would be present? How would people connect to the river? 2. What can't fit into your common vision because values are in conflict?

Purpose & Needs: Large group discussion. Participants were asked to list the problems and the opportunities related to the Missouri River. After that, participants were asked which natural resources should be addressed and to say what "restoration" meant to them. One team member facilitated, one recorded on the flip chart, and one took notes on a laptop.

## 3. Values Discussion.

Many people who live and work near the Missouri River value the history and culture of the river, its ecology and recreational opportunities, but more than anything else, they see it as a source of business. People live near the river because they can farm, transport goods and make a living on tourism. They view it as an asset as well as an unpredictable interference into their lives and livelihoods. The most often-mentioned value for the Missouri group was balance – balancing the natural state of the river against the economic livelihood of farmers, the navigation industry and other stakeholders.

### 3.a. Socio-cultural values

In general, Missouri participants see the possibilities for a river to add to quality of life and to build attachment to a place, but they don't see those possibilities as anywhere near fully realized. They boat on it, hunt and fish near it and sometimes just enjoy watching it flow by and wish that others had that opportunity, as well. Several mentioned that it's hard to get down to the river in many places, in part because of railroad tracks built along its bank, so many communities that are on the river seem disconnected from it. Basically, they said they think recreational opportunities along the river are a bonus, but the real value of the river is its economic importance to the people near it.

Some towns like Rocheport and Boonville manage to capitalize on tourism opportunities. The Katy Trail development has brought the most tourism, although some felt the greenways, trees and bluffs were as important to its success as the river itself. But in other areas, such as Kansas City, residents do not often access the river for recreational purposes. Some said there needs to be more river access, and others talked about the problem with fluctuations in flow that make boating problematic.

"It's not the prettiest river, but we could exploit it better for recreational use and local benefit," one participant said. "Part of the problem is that the river has shifted and people have lost contact with the river."

Even though they live near the river to work, people in the Missouri group have mixed feelings about its aesthetic and quality-of-life values. A handful said they use the river daily for recreation. Most, however, characterize it as dirty, muddy and full of debris. “I don’t want to use the river. It’s wild and dirty,” one participant wrote. They take for granted the need to “clean up” after it on a regular basis. More importantly, many people are afraid of the river and the destruction it did in floods of 1993 and other years.

Almost everyone recognizes the important historical role of Lewis and Clark and the part the Missouri River played in the settlement of many towns along it. This history and culture is still celebrated in festivals and remembered by many people who grew up along the river and stayed there. Some said the river provides a gathering place to bring people together. However, participants told several stories about river towns that have either “turned their backs” on the river or grown away from it.

“St. Joseph was founded because it was on the river and grew because it was on the river. St. Joe was known as a river town. Over the years, the town has turned its back on the river and thinks less of itself as a river town,” one said.

Many river towns on the Missouri do not actually offer access to the river. Boonville, for example, was founded by people who came up the river and it still relies on transportation along the river as a source of business. “There are lots of events and companies that use the river name. People are attracted to the town because of the river. I would like to see more access to the river, like canoeing and a restaurant on the river,” one participant said. But she added that in her position as an economic development advocate for Boonville, some of the greatest opportunities are being missed. “At the chamber, people are always asking, can I get out to the river? The answer is no.” A resident of Rocheport echoed the sentiment that the community is disconnected from the river, but there are efforts to reconnect.

### 3.b. Livelihood and wealth values

As noted above, Missouri participants see the major value of the river as a source of jobs and a support for businesses. “In Lexington, it’s one of our main businesses,” said one participant. “Boat and motor businesses sell a million dollars worth of equipment per year. We have two ramps in Lexington. Tourism is important, one of our top five sources of revenue.” However, most of the participants agree that the river is not being used to its fullest revenue-generating potential.

One important issue to almost all participants in Missouri is the value of the river for navigation. Those who farm say moving their products from rivers to railroad is more cost-effective than using trucks, and that barges reduce pollution from interstate highway traffic. They cited a statistic that one barge equals 57 tractor trailers or 100 railroad cars. Fertilizer is also transported on the river. But many pointed out that fluctuations in water levels keep the river from being as valuable a navigation tools as it could be.

Those who farm along the river point out its mixed blessings. While flooding bring fertile soil to the banks, farms along the river have been devastated by floods in some years, and farmers said they would like to be assured they would be safe from flooding. Several participants said they don’t think there should be further building in the flood plain. ”Flood control is my top priority, like the floods in ’93 and ’95,” one farmer said. “The spring rise increases the risk, and the timing makes it even more problematic.”

Participants said that the river brings tourism to small towns along the river, and offers potential for economic development. They think the river would draw more economic development if the risk of flooding were reduced, ensuring that investments along the river would not be lost to flooding.

In addition, Missouri residents see the river as an importance source of power generation and source of irrigation water.

### 3.c. Health and security values

The participants in Missouri were less concerned about health and security values than they were about economic values. They said that pesticide and herbicide runoff is an issue, and there have been some problems with the fertilizer Atrazine. "We need to produce the water that meets the demands of our people. Pollution, chemicals, and low water levels are problems," said one participant. "It's the only source of water – that's the sustainability factor. There are changes in water quality at different times of the year. And things like gasoline spills can be difficult."

Another said that degradation of the water channel threatens water intakes. The group believes we have made a significant investment in a healthy water supply. They said when water levels are low, it's more expensive to access water in the intake pipes. Finally, the group discussed the importance of the river for power generation, including the electrical and nuclear facilities on the river that draw cooling water from it. Once again, they also identified this as an economic value, since, for example, the Calloway County nuclear reactor provides employment and "provides half the revenue for the county."

### 3.d. Life-supporting, biocentric values

Some of the participants in Missouri talked about the life-sustaining value of the river, with one calling it "a fountain of youth." "I've lived all over the country and have never lived anywhere as beautiful. I want to preserve that," one participant said. Others discussed the importance of preserving wetlands and habitat.

Sustainability of the restoration plan is an issue to some. "Any plan should have long-term sustainability. If it's not sustainable, it's artificial, and artificial is expensive. Imposing human controls on rivers is expensive and can lead to disaster," one said.

The group expressed several times the idea that restoration of the river should be balanced against other factors; in other words, total restoration should not always be the only goal. "To me it's exciting to have a chance to see nature run her course a little, but I don't want to see it at the expense of people who are already on the river. We need farmers, we need barges," she said.

They spoke of their desire to see the return of original forest and plant species such as ferns. For this group, sand should be considered a natural resource that is being overharvested. They also said that the once-fertile soil of the riverbank was a natural resource, but as it is depleted, we should be concerned about the need to use additional fertilizers. They expressed concern about the amount of chemicals coming into the river from urban runoff.

Participants discussed several wildlife issues. One said snags have disappeared from the river, which has diminished areas where wildlife can reproduce. They said they were pleased that the reintroduction of wetlands had brought an increase in birds such as

herons, egrets and turkeys. Another said the reintroduced river otter population has reached 20,000.

But the group found it hard to define restoration, debating what would be the starting point for a return to a natural river. For some, restoration is not to be encouraged, because, as one said, "I think restoration means regulation and more rules of what you can and can't do." But another participant said that only the government is capable of restoring the river.

To some, the value of restoration is in making the river sustainable by return to a more natural state. "Restoration means taking back to some previous point in time, but can't do that to a living community like the Missouri River basin ecosystem. You *can* take it back to health," one said.

## 4. Purpose and Needs Discussion.

The group was not asked to wordsmith the purpose and needs statements. Members were given the opportunity to read each statement, then listed problems and opportunities.

Whether an opportunity is already included in the need statement depends on the definition of "social, economic and cultural values for future generations." Key opportunities the group identified were the opportunity to join together to clean up the river, to connect individuals to the river by increasing docks and marinas, to connect the river to tourism in small river towns and to the Katy Trail, to reinvent barges to make them smaller and more suitable to the Missouri River, to reinvent America by strengthening small towns to take pressure off unsustainable large metro areas, and to restore the river using more than a 100-year time scale.

The key problems the group identified were related to water levels (floods and changing flood levels; loss of wetlands; artificial water rises); impact on people (threat to small towns and farmers, diminishing barge traffic); management and data (lack of current flood maps, comprehensive GIS and current navigation charts, the unintended consequences of managing the river, too many federal agencies involved, poor cooperation and collaboration); and quality of life (lack of enlightened quality-of-life indicators; lack of enlightened social cost/benefit analysis that factor in values other than economic ones).

Natural resources the group wanted the restoration to include were: native plant species along the river bottoms; water birds like herons and egrets; sand, sediment and the declining stream bed; big bass; native species of mussels; and snags.

## 5. Visioning

As they imagined the future of the river, the participants agreed that a successful future depends upon finding the proper balance in several areas, such as between the needs of humans and the needs of nature, between the various stakeholder groups and between the recreational as well as economic values they bring to the table. Participants agreed that various interests would have to work together to reach their vision.

Participants imagined a future in which the river is utilized to its fullest potential in various areas include:

- **Recreation.** The river would be cleaner, providing safe drinking water and with less debris along its banks. Because combined sewer outflows have been fixed, people would be swimming in the river without concern. There would be more

access points and increased hiking and biking trails along the river; public docks and parks in each community, and abundant wildlife for everyone to enjoy.

- **Environmental quality:** In addition to be clean and chemical free, the river would support healthy fishing. New wetland areas would provide natural filtration.
- **Navigation:** Barge traffic would have increased, with barges designed specifically for the Missouri River. New products would be shipped by river and more communities would have viable ports for getting goods to market. In addition, a recreational river traffic industry would have developed, with passenger vehicles like paddle-wheelers or shallow draft vessels carrying people and goods between newly-restored riverfronts. Navigation between Kansas City and St. Louis would be common.
- **Power:** We would have increased the use of the river for hydro-powered electricity plus other sustainable energy sources along the river.
- **Flood control:** All levees would have been rebuilt to withstand a 500–year flood, the channels deepened and levees maintained. We would also have found a way to assure there would be reliable flows.
- **Culture/historical heritage:** Missouri river communities would be thriving as eco- and recreational tourists flock to their spruced-up shores**.** The river would be a classroom for young people and a new inland waterways research institute would be contributing to expanded understanding of the science of the river. New historical exhibits and vistas celebrating Lewis and Clark's journeys would be in place. Some parts of the river might be converted into a national park.
- **Restoration:** The river would be restored as much as possible to its natural state without limiting navigation, agriculture or other important uses. The rich farmland would be preserved, and there would be new wetlands and restored ecosystems. We'd see an increase in native plants, fish and animals.
- **Management:** Flood plain development would have been controlled to avoid additional runoff and flooding. Different sections of the river would be managed differently, depending upon the needs of the residents in that area. The river would be restored to flood-carrying capacity.

## APPENDIX A: Names and contact information for participants

**Navigation**

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1** | Ray Bohlken | Capital Sand | | rbohlken@capitalsandcompany.com |
| **2** | Chris Gutierrez | president, KC SmartPort. | 816.374.5680 | gutierrez@kcsmartport.com |
| **3** | Vincent Gauthier | KC Port Authority | | vgauthier@kcportauthority.com |

**Fish and wildlife**

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1** | Norman Stucky | Retired employee of the Department of Conservation in NE and MO. | 573.635.6750 | npstucky@aol.com |

**Recreation (boating, fishing, hunting, ecotourism)**

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1** | Scott Mansker | Missouri River 340. | 913.244.4666 | scott@rivermiles.com |
| **2** | Mike Cooper | Owner, Cooper's Landing | 573.657.2544 | cooperslanding@tranquility.net |
| **3** | Brett Dufur | Owns Mighty MO Canoe Rentals. Wrote the Katy Trail Guidebook. | 573.698.3903 | pebblepublishing@gmail.com |

**Agriculture**

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1** | Terry Hilgedick | Farmer, Hartsburg, MO. On MO Corn Growers Association board. | 573.657.0302 (w), 573.999.0490 © | riverside1@centurytel.net |
| **2** | Jay Fischer | Grows corn. Does a corn maze in the fall. | 573.636.0450 (h), 573.659.7640 © | fischergrainfarm@aol.com |
| **3** | Rob Korff | Vice chair of MO Corn Merchandising Council. | 660.593.3586 (h), 660.593.3570 (w) | rkorff@greenhills.net |
| **4** | Peggy Smart | Farms and run a grain elevator and ag input sales in central Missouri | 573.295.4583 | wesmart74@aol.com |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **5** | Rusty Lee | 39358 Pin Oak Church Road, Truxton, MO 63381. | 636.597.4551 h, 314.954.0551 c | rusty@leefarms.net |
| **6** | Tom Waters | 36257 Highway Z, Orrick MO 54077. Chair of the Missouri Levee and Drainage District. | 816.770.5562 | waters4@ix.netcom.com |
| **Business / Chambers of Commerce** | | | | |
| **1** | Todd White | Owner, Katy Bike Rental. President of Defiance Merchant Association. | 636-987-2673/ 314-223-3423, Todd cell 314.578.7300 | robinsnestonthekatytrail@yahoo.com |
| **2** | Kendall Kircher | board member, MFA Incorporated | 660-848-2813h, 660-621-1985c | mofarmmom@yahoo.com |
| **3** | Lisa McClary | Works for City of Boonville Tourism and owns Missouri River Monument co. | 660-882-2721 | mcclaryl@boonville-mo.org |
| **4** | Jeffery Hartle | Park University. Teaches disaster and emergency management. | 660.441.1976 | jeffery.hartle@park.edu |
| **Cultural & Historic Preservation** | | | | |
| **1** | Nancy Grant | Mayor of Hartsburg, MO. Created a Lewis & Clark event. | 573.657.9581 | mrodemeyer@socket.net |
| **2** | Art Mehrhoff | University of Missouri Museum of Art & Archaeology - involved in heritage tourism. | 573.882.3591 | mehrhoffw@missouri.edu |
| **3** | Tom Dunn | Gateway Arch Riverboats docked by the Arch | 314.982.1410 | tdunn@gatewayarchriverboats.com |
| **4** | Kathryn Frazier | Chair, historic preservation commission. Augusta, MO | 636.448.4034 | kathryn@leadershipcareercenter.com, Kathrynfrazier@mac.com |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **5** | Roger Slusher | volunteer, with Lexington Historic Preservation Commission | 660.259.2900 | rslusher@yahoo.com |

**Communities and local gov'ts** that depend on MO River for h20 & power

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1** | John Bremser | assistant plant manager of maintenance, KCMO Water Services Department | 816.513.7151 | john_bremser@kcmo.org |
| **2** | Gabe Craighead | Commissioner, Callaway County | 573.642.0737 | comish@callawaycounty.org |
| **3** | Cindy Hebenstreit | American Water - supplies water to St. Joe, Jeff City and St. Louis County using the Missouri River. | 314.996.2391 | cindy.hebenstreit@amwater.com |

**Environmental & conservation**

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1** | Jim Karpowicz | Founder, Missouri River Relief and current board member. | 573.424.0077(h) | docugroup@aol.com |
| **2** | Tom Ball | River educator, Americorps volunteer. | 314.962.1241 | thomas.ball@sbcglobal.net |

**People who live on the river**

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1** | Edward A Catron | Has 11 acres and a truck garden and a house on the river. | 816.390.6447 | edcatron@yahoo.com |
| **2** | John B. Wood | St. Joseph area | 816.273.4086 | j3recon@yahoo.com |

## APPENDIX B: Letter requesting participant names

Dear [NAME]:

I am writing to ask for your assistance. I would appreciate it if you would suggest participants for a focus group that will help determine the future of the Missouri River basin ecosystem. Consensus, a nonprofit organization based in Missouri, is holding the focus group as part of an eight-state effort to engage the public in planning. The whole effort is being led by the U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution.

The Missouri session will be held from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Friday, October 2nd in Jefferson City, Missouri.

**What do I need from you?**
If you're willing, By September 1, please provide names and contact information (phone, address, email) of three to five people you think would make great focus group participants. If you wanted to tell me a couple of sentences about each one, that would be a big help.

[This paragraph was tailored to each stakeholder area. This is one example.] In particular, we have four seats set aside specifically for people who are involved with the river in terms of fish and wildlife. So far, I just have two names for that category, and neither have confirmed. The two are Norman Stucky and Jeff Barrow, both suggested by the Conservation Federation of Missouri. If you have other ideas for groups to go to for recommendations, I would be glad to have the advice.

Using the recommendations that you and others provide, we will assemble a group of 40 that reflects the diversity of uses and interests in the Missouri River. Please note that I can't guarantee I'll be able to invite every person you suggest. Also, we are not asking you to suggest individuals who will speak on behalf of any organization. We will ask focus group participants to speak only for themselves.

**General guidelines for the focus group participants**
*First and foremost, we are seeking true members of the public, without a major organizational stake in the project so far*. That means, for example, a farmer rather than the head of the state agency that works with farmers, or volunteer who helped clean up the river rather than the director of the nonprofit that organized the clean-up.

We also want to include:

- People who know people, who have networks;
- Those who are interested in the Missouri River and water-related issues; and
- A mix of people who see the Missouri River from a fresh perspective and those with a historical perspective.

People are involved with the Missouri River in many ways, and we will include a variety of interests, including: navigation; fish and wildlife; recreation (boating, fishing, hunting, tourism and eco-tourism); agriculture; business; cultural and historic preservation; people from communities or local governments who depend on the Missouri River for water supply and power; environmental/conservation organizations; those who live on the river; and Native American tribes.

**Background on the plan**
The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, in partnership with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services, is starting a long-term study and plan called the Missouri River Ecosystem Restoration Plan (MRERP). The plan will guide the actions required to restore ecosystem functions, mitigate habitat losses, and recover native fish and wildlife on the Missouri River. The plan will address several conditions. For example, 51 of 67 native fish species are not rare, uncommon or decreasing, and aquatic insects, a key link in the food chain, have dropped by 70 percent. Although the river will never be brought back to the wild, untamed form encountered by Lewis and Clark, its ecosystem can be revitalized for the benefit of all the basin's inhabitants.

The plan also requires that the ecosystem restoration seek balance with social, economic, and cultural values for future generations. The Missouri River currently hosts many interests and uses, all of which are being considered in the river's recovery program. These uses include social, economic, historical and cultural uses such as agriculture, commerce, conservation, energy, environmental, natural resources, navigation, recreation, residential, urban uses and water supply.

**Background on Consensus**
Consensus is celebrating 25 years of putting the *public* in public policy. It does this in a variety of ways, from citizen-based studies to processes like deliberation and future search conferences. Consensus provides the neutral space, research and processes that give citizens a voice. Consensus works on behalf of the local community as well as clients from metro Kansas City and around the U.S. For more information, visit www.consensuskc.org.

Thank you very much for your time and your consideration of this request. We are excited about convening a group of regular Missourians who will help determine the shape of the Missouri River basin ecosystem for generations to come. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Jennifer Wilding
Director, Consensus
816.531.5078
www.consensuskc.org

p.s. Please consider letting folks know about two public meetings. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service are conducting the meetings, which

give people a chance to talk about the scope of the restoration. You don't need to RSVP, and anyone can attend. They include:

- Merriam, Kansas. September 1, 2009, at the Irene B. French Community Center, 5701 Merriam Drive, from 3 to 5 p.m. and from 6 to 8 p.m.
- St. Charles, Missouri. September 2, 2009, at the County Administration Building, 201 North Second Street, rooms 115 and 116, from 3 to 5 p.m. and from 6 to 8 p.m.

## APPENDIX C: Confirmation letter to participant group

Hello all:

Thanks again for agreeing to participate in a focus group about the restoration of the Missouri River basin ecosystem. It's been such a pleasure to talk and correspond with members of this group, and I'm looking forward to meeting each of you in person.

I'm writing to provide details on the site and the group. I have also included background information that most of you received in an earlier email. I'll send another one or two emails closer to the event. If you have any specific questions, please let me know.

**When and where**
The focus group will be held from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Friday, October 2nd, in the Lincoln Room of the *Capitol Plaza Hotel, 415 W. McCarty Street, Jefferson City*, Missouri 65101.

**Lunch arrangements**
We had initially thought we would be allowed to provide lunch for focus group participants, but that is not going to work. It pains me to do this, but *I need to ask each participant to bring $15 for a box lunch*, the least expensive option on the hotel catering menu. If that would make it difficult for you to attend, please give me a call at 816.531.5078. Each of you is important to the success of this meeting and I don't want this to get in the way of anyone's participation.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has a policy against paying for meals or travel expenses for people who are involved in their activities. In part, this is based on the need to avoid the appearance of any group being "bought." The hostess in me says that when each of you is paying for travel and giving us your day, lunch would have been a tiny reward for such a big contribution, but I also understand why the Corps has its policy. I hope you understand, too.

**Who**
I'm providing a list of people who have agreed to participate for three reasons.

- I want you to have a sense of what a great group of people you'll be with on October 2nd.
- You may want to carpool with people who are coming from your area. Let me know if there's someone you want to contact about carpooling, and I'll set that up.
- You may be able to recommend someone to fill the last few open seats.

Participants are divided into categories so we could make sure to have a group that fairly represents a variety of interests. Some people could easily fit into more than one category and the descriptions are too brief to do everyone justice. Almost all participants were recommended by an organization involved in the area of interest. Many more individuals were invited than were able to attend.

Navigation

- Chris Gutierrez, president, KC SmartPort
- Jesse Lybarger, tugboat pilot
- Bill Jackson, manager, Brunswick River Terminal
- Capital Sand, staff member to be named.

Fish & Wildlife

- Norman Stucky, retired employee of Nebraska and Missouri departments of conservation.
- Dave Stous, retired engineer, board member with Missouri River Relief
- Audubon group member – name to come
- OPEN SEAT (Many in this category would rather fish than talk about fishing.)

Recreation (hunting, boating, fishing, ecotourism)

- Travis Worley, Missouri River 340 volunteer and race winner
- Mike Cooper, owner, Cooper's Landing
- Brett Dufer, owner, Mighty MO Canoe Rentals
- Adam Wolf, owner, Tombstone Tackle

Agriculture

- Terry Hilgedick, farmer, Hartsburg MO
- Jay Fischer, farmer and agritainment operator
- Peggy Smart, farmer and grain elevator operator
- Rusty Lee, farmer, Truxton MO
- Tom Waters, farmer and chair of MO Levee and Drainage District
- Invitation pending

Business/Chambers of Commerce

- Todd White, owner, Katy Bike Rental and president of Defiance Merchant Assoc.
- Lisa McClary, owner, Missouri River Monument Co. and employee, Boonville Tourism
- Larry Miskel, owner, B&B, and mayor of Hermann MO
- Kendall Kircher, board member, MFA Incorporated

Cultural & Historic Preservation

- Nancy Grant, mayor of Hartsburg MO
- Art Mehrhoff, University of MO Museum of Art & Archaeology
- Tom Dunn, owner, Gateway Arch Riverboats
- Kathryn Frazier, chair, historic preservation commission, Augusta MO
- Invitation pending

Communities and local governments that depend on the river for water and power

- Paul Ling or delegate, Kansas City Power & Light
- John Bremser, Kansas City, MO, Water Services Department
- Gabe Craighead, Callaway County Commissioner
- OPEN SEAT

Environmental & Conservation

- Susan Wiegand, owner, Ideal Garment, and environmentalist
- Jim Karpowicz, founder and board member, Missouri River Relief
- Sarah Pennington, Missouri River Communities Network and Friends of the Big Muddy
- Invitation pending

People who live on the river

- Edward Catron, St. Joseph area
- John Wood, St. Joseph area
- OPEN SEAT
- OPEN SEAT

If you have any recommendations for people to fill open seats, I would be happy to have them, along with phone numbers and email addresses.

See below for background on the focus group, MRERP project and Consensus. Please call or email if you have any questions. Thanks again for your commitment to the Missouri River.

Best regards,
Jennifer

Jennifer Wilding
Director, Consensus
816.531.5078
www.consensuskc.org

**Background on the focus group**

We are assembling a group that consists of true members of the public, without a major organizational stake in the restoration of the river. That means, for example, a farmer rather than the head of the state agency that works with farmers, or a volunteer who helped clean up the river rather than the paid staff person who organized the clean-up. We will ask participants to speak only for themselves, as individuals, rather than as representatives of any group.

We are shooting for an interesting mix of 40 people who represent the various ways that Missourians are involved with the Missouri River. The variety of interests include: navigation; fish and wildlife; recreation (boating, fishing, hunting, tourism and eco-tourism); agriculture; business; cultural and historic preservation; people from communities or local governments who depend on the Missouri River for water supply and power; environmental/conservation organizations; and those who live on the river.

Most of the day, you'll be talking with your fellow participants. The only exception is a lunchtime presentation on the restoration project. You'll explore what the river means to you and to others, discuss the problems and opportunities that affect the Missouri River ecosystems, and work in small groups to create a vision of the future. You don't need to be an expert on the Missouri River; I am contacting you because the group needs your unique perspective.

**Background on the plan**
The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, in partnership with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services, is starting a long-term study and plan called the Missouri River Ecosystem Restoration Plan (MRERP). The plan will guide the actions required to restore ecosystem functions, mitigate habitat losses, and recover native fish and wildlife on the Missouri River. The plan will address several conditions. For example, 51 of 67 native fish species are now rare, uncommon or decreasing, and aquatic insects, a key link in the food chain, have dropped by 70 percent. Although the river will never be brought back to the wild, untamed form encountered by Lewis and Clark, its ecosystem can be revitalized for the benefit of all the basin's inhabitants.

The plan also requires that the ecosystem restoration seek balance with social, economic, and cultural values for future generations. The Missouri River currently hosts many interests and uses, all of which are being considered in the river's recovery program. These uses include social, economic, historical and cultural uses such as agriculture, commerce, conservation, energy, environmental, natural resources, navigation, recreation, residential, urban uses and water supply.

**Background on Consensus**
Consensus is celebrating 25 years of putting the *public* in public policy. It does this in a variety of ways, from citizen-based studies to processes like deliberation and future search conferences. Consensus provides the neutral space, research and processes that give citizens a voice. Consensus works on behalf of the local community as well as clients from metro Kansas City and around the U.S. For more information, visit www.consensuskc.org.

**Consensus**
"We put the *public* in public policy"

PO Box 10252
Kansas City, MO 64171
816.531.5078
816.531.4507 (event RSVPs)
www.consensuskc.org
jenwilding@consensuskc.org

# Missouri: Missouri River basin ecosystem restoration

## Notes from meeting held 10/2/09 in Jefferson City

## 10:30-noon. Values Exercise

Groups of eight interview and are interviewed using 4 questions. Then people divide into groups based on which of the four questions they were assigned to share what they heard and come up with a report to the large group.

**Question #1: What is your interest in and connection to the Missouri River?**

Flip chart notes:

- Agriculture
- Tourism
- Economic development
- Quality of life / livelihood
- Sense of wildness
- Drinking water
- Recreation

Issues include:

- Changing water levels
- Levee maintenance
- High water – levees – tourism
- Ecofriendly
- Cargo movers

- Sediment degradation

Notes from the Q1 group discussion:

- "Three people I interviewed said, 'My entire life is related to that river.'"
- "Even people who make their livelihood on the river care about it. Nobody says to exploit it for all it's worth."
- "It's some of the most productive agricultural land in the state and that's true because of the wildness of the river."
- "Whenever the Missouri River floods, the St. Louis media show a picture of the Lewis & Clark statue halfway under water. People aren't going to travel to Augusta, Missouri, where she's spent $100,000 on a business, if they think it's flooded." Man commenting on an interview.
- "On the Mississippi, they can have the Midwest version of Carnival Cruise Lines on the river. You can't do that on the Missouri because it fluctuates."
- "We have an investment in recreation and marinas."
- On management of the river: "Could we make a plan and stick with it? If I can work 24/7 as a tugboat operator on the Mississippi, versus a three-month window on the Missouri, where you gonna go?"
- "Will navigation ever be profitable on the Missouri? It's a different river. There's only so much the Corps can do on a widely fluctuating river."
- The group talked about water runoff from roofs and parking lots and into streams, and the impact on flood control.

Notes from notepads:*

- "Pesticide and herbicide runoff is a bit issue. Having a river free of contaminants is important to Missouri River water."
- "It's a fountain of youth, a garden of Eden."
- "I'm not a fan of the spring rise."
- "Our business depends on tourism and getting people into town. When the river floods, that shuts down."
- "I just love rivers."
- The river attracts people to Boonville who care about the river's beauty, and who see ecotourism and heritage tourism as economic renewal.
- "I've incorporated the river into my life." There's a biological drive to explore. "What's around the bend?" Like the cycle of wilderness and going back in time.

- I grew upon the Missouri River in Hartsburg, and I operate a farm in the river bottoms. Flood control is my top priority, like the floods in ’93 and ’95. The spring rise increases the risk, and the timing makes it even more problematic.
- Navigation is mainly a matter of shipping fertilizing in and grain out.
- “I farmed with my grandpa.” I boat and fish on the river and am interested in the history.
- I operate a marina at mile 170. It’s one of the few that survive. I live at the site in the flood plain in an area that’s not levee protected.

**Question #2: What do you need from the Missouri River and are your needs being met? What benefits do you receive from the river?**

Flip chart pages:

The page was set up on a continuum of “met” to “not met,” with needs appearing at different points on the continuum. This transcription attempts to say about how “met” each need is, without trying to recreate the graphic elements:

- 95% met
    - irrigation
- 90% met
    - water quality,
    - energy production costs
- 60% met
    - farming
    - forested wetland, habitat, environment
- 40% met
    - Flood protection
    - Don’t build in flood plain (homes, business, firm, agriculture) - levees
    - Drinking water supply
    - Tourism
    - River boats
    - Transportation / navigation
- 30% met
    - Energy
    - Farms to market
- 20% met or less

    - Recreation – boating, fishing, hunting, habitat
    - Marinas

Benefits from the river

- Lewis & Clark history
- Education
- Spirit of America
- Camp fire by flowing water
- Ducks & deer
- Commercial fisheries have crashed or market bottomed out. No mussels.

Notes from notepads:*

- "I would like to see more camping sites."
- "Too much revenue is expended protecting societal infrastructure."
- "Development seems to lose the identity of the area."
- Low water intake issues due to low flow – high expense to do that. Equipment needed due to low flow concerns. It's a two-day set-up to install, and there's a high pump costs to pump water twice.
- Small towns depend on recreation and tourism dollars.
- The big rigs on I-70 – increased truck traffic is problematic. We need to reduce traffic on the highway. (by using the river for barge traffic)
- "The barge industry has taken a hit." We need the industry for its ability to move crops to market cheaply.
- "I'm a farmer. My livelihood depends on flood protection for my farm and home."
- "I need protection from flooding, and the flooding is caused by excessive levee construction."
- People want to use the river but can't because there's no access.
- "I need a dependable channel for barge traffic. Droughts cause problems. The Missouri River is an unreliable source. Low water levels limit tonnage and increases costs. You can fit 58 truckloads on one barge, which reduces highway traffic and emissions."
- "Sixty percent of the Mississippi River water at St. Louis comes from the Missouri River. Low and high water levels affect operation of our boats (by the Gateway Arch). We need limits on how low and high the water levels can be."
- "We need more connectivity. There are only three boat ramps in Kansas City."
- "Degradation of the water channel threatens water intakes."

**Question #3: What does the Missouri River mean to your community? How has the river shaped the culture of your community?**

Flip chart pages:

- Drinking water – quantity; enough for navigation is enough for drinking water.
- Power plants
- Jobs – nuclear plant, transportation, agriculture
- Infrastructure – Potential for more access; not being used enough (KC)
- Flooding – prevents economic development (no building in areas that flood); but – access = tourism, recreation
- No marinas, virtually, on the river
- Recreation
    - Don't want to use the river – it's wild and dirty
    - Community of people using the river
    - Not accessing culture and history
    - Hunting, fishing, boating
    - Festivals
- Respect for the river
    - Danger – fear (but overrated?)
    - Education needed – awareness – getting people to the river
- Livelihood – navigation, transportation, agriculture
- Recreation
- Culture
    - Missed opportunity for the state
    - Lewis & Clark
    - People came to this area by river
- Floods – 1993
    - Los land
    - Levy protection varies by area
    - Drainage – affects agricultural production
- Agriculture
    - Barge transport

    - Grain shipping
    - Bring in fertilizer
    - Dollars to highways versus to barging
- Quality of river experiences
    - Nature center
    - River walk
    - Pedestrian bridges
    - Trails
- Beautiful – River presence an attraction, identity. Quality of life.
- Transportation – recreation balance needed

Notes from notepads:*

- What does the MO River mean to your community? "Not as much now as when the community was formed. We consider ourselves a river town. The river was where life revolved around. Now it's mostly recreation. We still have ties. People like to fish and hunt along the river, and see the river as an artery for commerce. It is part of the culture."
- "I can't get the kids to school or go to work because of flooding."
- "The Missouri River is dangerous and fast and dirty. It's beautiful with birds, but some people trash it because it's not controlled."
- "St. Joseph was founded because it was on the river and grew because it was on the river. St. Joe was known as a river town. Over the years, the town has turned its back on the river and thinks less of itself as a river town."
- "There's a perception of the Missouri being a 'muddy' river with a faster current, and people are afraid of it."
- "My town (Defiance) is not associated with the river itself but the greenway, hills, trees and bluffs. The Katy Trail has proximity to the river, and it brings tourism. The wildness of the river has helped preserve the greenery around it."
- "I've lived all over the country and have never lived anywhere as beautiful. I want to preserve that."
- There is a streaming webcam (24/7) that shows eagles, falcons, etc., on the Missouri River at www.stjoemoweb.com.
- "As a boy, I played on the river. Now I own part of the family farm and am involved in the history of Lexington."
- "The question and concern is always what happens when the river is high. I live near Hartsburg on the flood plain. There was flood damage in 1986, '93 and '95, and my home was destroyed. When the river is low you have a

thousand problems; when the river is high, you have one. Most years, there's no flooding."

- "In terms of culture, the Hartsburg area was a German settlement. The river brought the people and they liked the area because it reminded them of the Rhine. My ancestors came here in 1920 and the family has farmed since then."
- "The river is an asset with economic importance. Recreation is a bonus, things like fishing, nature watching, but primary is really the economic boost on the county, state and country. It's an efficient form of transportation to move commodities by barge and rail."
- "I have respect for the river. The river helps, but it can also take away."
- "Booneville is a river town, although it doesn't have access to the river. It's part of our history. The town's founder came up the river, and the transportation link has stayed. In terms of culture, there were steamboats and a sense of history of movement. It provides an internal identity for people, but also the community, like the Big Muddy Folk Festival. There are lots of events and companies that use the river name. People are attracted to the town because of the river. I would like to see more access to the river, like canoeing and a restaurant on the river. At the chamber, people are always asking, can I get out to the river? The answer is no. But our new bridge has a pedestrian lane. People fought for it and raised money for it. People walk and bike across to see the river."
- "Kansas City has forgotten it's a river town. Most people don't think about it, they just drive over it. Kansas City wouldn't be there if not for the river. Kansas City grew fast and it's affected by that legacy in its layout. The historical and industrial areas are by the river. We're insulted from the river by flood control, railroad tracks and fields. No one can get down to the river so no one goes down. There's a renaissance to reconnect with the river. It started with boat access, right in downtown Kansas City."
- "It's healing to just watch the water move by."
- "If younger people are intimately involved with a resource they will speak up and be a protector. People protect resources through participation."

Notes from the conversation

- Navigation is globally important and important to the state and nation.
- There have been considerable economic investments in water supply.
- Without the use of navigation and barges going up the river, the costs of transport increase. We need all modes of transport. Lots of fertilizer is moved on the river.
- Very concerned with flood control, and flood damaging agricultural crops.
- Need more docks and access and public facilities between Omaha and St Joe. There is not enough access.

- “The river is a totally selfish and personal experience to me. I enjoy the sunrises and sunsets.”
- “I soak in the river all the time. I am worried about all the sunscreen oil from the Dakotas upstream and the water quality.”
- I like to sit and watch the river go by. WE fish the river too.
- We strongly oppose putting dirt and sediment back in the river – we spend thousands of dollars preventing erosion.
- “I have a canoe business, not just a business, but a quality of life for me, being a river guide. I feel like I’m reconnecting people with nature and history. It is an outdoor classroom and learning about Lewis and Clark. So many people don’t know that the river has been channelized. The river is only in the news when it is in flood stage. I need stable levels for canoeing. I feel like the river levels are like the stock markets and its nerve wracking. Just wait for a couple of inches of rain to put you over the top.”
- When water levels are low, it’s more expensive to access water in the intake pipes.
- There are issues with Atrazine – a chemical from fertilizers.
- We need smarter use of the flood plain.
- Flooding is why it is fertile land along the river.
- Need more investment in recreational development and access along the river. However, there is a need for flood risk protection with economic investment.
- Navigation is an environmentally friendly way to move products. Could have much more traffic on I-70 and more traffic accidents.
- There is so much more boating on the Mississippi River. The Missouri River is fast and fluctuates too much. In KC there are 3 boat ramps that are not used.
- Carp are non-native fish and are crowding out everything.
- Private property rights. The government has tried to buy our property. “Over my dead body.”
- The levies are working – protecting farming from flooding. But there shouldn’t be building in the flood plain.
- The river provides a culture as a river town, a gathering place, brings people together for kinship.
- “With recreation, there is a perceived (and real) danger with the river with drowning. It’s dirty, polluted, and so much debris (like bathtubs!) dumped into the river.”
- 60% of the water supply in the Mississippi river comes from the Missouri River – important for navigation.
- It takes a lot more energy and fuel cost to move up the MR than the Mississippi River because the MR flows so much moiré quickly.

**Question #4: What does the Missouri River mean to the economic vitality and sustainability of your community and state?**

Flip chart pages:

- Economic potential is not being met
  - Navigation
  - No one aspect is being full realized
  - Water fluctuation / unpredictable
- Tourism
  - Connection to the river draws tourists
  - Communities need to better develop river resources (river front)
- Development (River leads people to move to a location)
  - River views
  - Marinas, restaurants
  - Barge terminals
- Agriculture
  - Lost potential douring floods
- Power generation
- Marketing tool for business
  - Navigation
  - Recruit on recreation
- Navigation
  - Takes pressure off of highways
  - Safety increases
- Sustainability
  - Artificial / Managed river is expensive
  - There are unintended consequences of managing the river
  - Hurts recreation
- Historic value
  - Towns take advantage of tourism
- Ecotourism
- Quality of life

    - Can help get people to think preservation
    - Improves economic viability of a community
- Recreation
    - Hiking / Biking (Katy Trail)
    - Hunting and fishing
    - Parks
- Perceived “or real” danger of river
    - Decreases economic viability of river
    - River debris (economic damage)
- Downstream impacts
    - Mississippi River
- Floods devastating to community
    - Restore flood carrying capacity
- Private property rights
- Flood plain
    - Flood plain insurance

**Notes from Q4 group discussion**

- There are many problems with flooding.
- Farmers – concept of navigability of river. Ability to move their product. Like to go from rivers to railroads, efficient way to move goods.
- Finding balance in river is important.
- Don’t need an artificial spring rise. If they turn it on and then get sustained weather, can be a big problem.
- Corps thinks it has the inside track on weather statements. Farmers don’t put as much stock in weather forecasts.
- With lakes along the river, political battle about releasing water.
- Never talk about impact of Mississippi River but it affects the river system coming down from St. Paul.
- Tourism – towns capitalize on tourism. Rocheport, Boonville. Lots of hunting and fishing. Could have more conservation land.
- # of river towns get municipal water from the river. Homes with river views are worth high dollar. Even a room in a nursing home is worth more if it overlooks the river.

- Many towns are underdeveloped in usage of MO River. They're not using at all because we build railroads along the river. Especially underdeveloped compared to Iowa and Kansas.
- Mo River at upper basins - are not the same as down here. Don't get flooded like we do down here. They don't understand what happens here. Seven inches of rain to us could be a problem.
- Electrical generating facilities – on river. Draw cooling water. Important to the state and need a steady water source.
- More would use river for navigation if we could count on it. But fear they might cut off at harvest time. This way- we have to use trucks.
- One barge = 57 tractor trailers or 100 railroad cars.
- Sustainability – if we impose artificial controls, it's more expensive. Ohio and Mississippi – examples of rivers used well. Hard to satisfy everyone.
- Historic value. Major cities and small towns wouldn't have sprouted up because of Lewis and Clark.
- Ecotourism opportunities
- No matter what business you come from, none are being utilized as much as they could be. No aspect is getting the full benefit of the river.
- Work next to KATY bridge in Boonville. People want to get down to the river. People want to see river, touch and see. Could lead to business development but doesn't now.
- Underutilized river because of unpredictable season. Don't want to build a home on the river if river might wipe you out. When too high, a problem. When too low, a problem.
- Incredible number of people just want to be able to sit by the river and watch the sunset. Quality of life experience, not fully developed.
- People who are working on economic development say when businesses look at Missouri, want quality of life. Companies coming in don't feel like we offer quality of life.
- Perception – has always been a muddy river. Has a lot of tragedy, undertow. I'm afraid of it. Have respect for it. In 1993, could canoe in it.
- MO Department of Natural Resources let Jefferson City put a sewer plant on the flood plain.
- I water ski and I'm on it 3-4 nights a week. I perceive it as clean. I've never gotten an infection.
- Have to respect the river. It's dangerous.
- Incredible amount of debris, lumber etc. comes down the river.
- Business owner – costs money every year to clean up debris.

- Farmer agrees. Says its part of dealing with it. Has always been that way.
- One reason potential is not met is because of so much debris.
- It's a little prettier from the bluff than it is when you're actually on the river.

**What was surprising? What was important?**

- Floods can be devastating.
- Need to restore flood-carrying capacity.
- Concern about private property rights – that Corps will come in and take over.

Notes from notepads:*

- "People want to see the river and get to it."
- "We need to produce the water that meets the demands of our people. Pollution, chemicals, and low water levels are problems. It's the only source of water – that's the sustainability factor. There are changes in water quality at different times of the year. And things like gasoline spills can be difficult."
- "The river is a major economic influence in central Missouri, for farming, the resources it provides, and as a tourism engine for things like the Missouri River 340, and towns like Hermann, Augusta, and the Les Beaurgeois (sp?) winery. The river has shaped the land to produce wine. People locate there and it affects property taxes. The river is part of our identity."
- "In general, the Missouri River has not been utilized to its maximum ability to positively affect economic vitality."
- "We need more camping and more state parks. We should get more in touch with natural cycles."
- "It's not the prettiest river, but we could exploit it better for recreational use and local benefit. Part of the problem is that the river has shifted and people have lost contact with the river."
- "Any plan should have long-term sustainability. If it's not sustainable, it's artificial, and artificial is expensive. Imposing human controls on rivers is expensive and can lead to disaster."
- The Missouri River is necessary for cooling the Callaway County nuclear power plant. "The employment is good for the community and the plant provides half the revenue for the county." Low water can be a problem for the plant, but high water is no problem.
- "The average Kansas City citizen doesn't realize the importance of the river in their everyday lives."
- Sand and gravel from the river is used for infrastructure.
- "We have a world trade opportunity if the river is reliable."

- "In Lexington, it's one of our main businesses. Boat and motor businesses sell $1 million worth of equipment per year. We have two ramps in Lexington. Tourism is important, one of our top five sources of revenue. It's not a big farming area."
- "The view of the river is very valued."
- "All the water in St. Louis comes from rivers."
- "The river is a marketing tool to bring business to the area."
- "In Rocheport, it's part of the past and a huge part of the future." The community has been disconnected from the river, and it's important to reconnect the youth and the community to the river.

***Notes from notepads.** People were given small notepads to use when taking notes during the group interviews. We collected the notepads afterwards. We have selected notes to include. These are not close to being complete and simply reflect the convener's sense of what was legible, interesting, well-stated, or missing from the group reports.*

## Noon to 1 p.m. Presentation from the Corps

**Participant questions for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers:**

**Any discussion of government coming in and using eminent domain to take land?**

- Don't see any interest in doing that right now. Would take congressional direction for that to change.

**Do you have cooperative agreements with the states that the river goes through?**

- Each of 8 states has been made part of cooperative agency team. MRRIC has all states represented. Seeking formal involvement from basin states.

**Is the Mississippi River Conservation Committee a model for this?**
MRCC is basically scientists. MRRIC is meant to represent all interests, hydropower to flood management to navigation. MRRIC is broader to help shape policy.

**What is the target? How do you know you are done?**
That should be part of this study, to look at broad alternatives. They would be compared and discussed in public forums. That would be part of the discussion and recommendations would be put forward. But it might depend on when you're funded on it.

**What's the baseline? 1934? 1500?**
I see that of part of the discussion we have started today. As these meetings progress, more focus will be added.

**Commend you guys on the new research you're under taking. Wonder why it's taken so long. From books I've written, channeling destroyed lots of ecosystem. Do you think you can find support to restore the ecosystem?**
For the Corps, there wasn't much funding or talk from Congress to do restoration. Country moved as a whole and I see that being reflected. If we come up with things that work for the basin, there will be opportunities to get them done.

**Relationship between habitat and flood attenuation?**
Large floods, hard to attenuate. What adds to flood storage, areas that have come into conservation. Set back levies in conservation area helps.

**Any plan has to take into account that because of new concrete, parking lots and roads, the basin has less ability to absorb water.**
There are some ways to increase infiltration in urban areas. The Missouri is large basin so its takes a large effort to affect it.

**Don't see any mention of millions of dollars invested in the Missouri River…is there an economic analysis factor?**
Asking about quality and quantity of habitats. Doesn't lend itself to precise number of what each acre impact is. Corps researchers are asking if we can qualify ecosystems.

**Will this study be peer reviewed?**
New guidance – independent peer review. Funds go through independent entity. Bring experts together to review plan and provide comments, all the way up to Congress.

**Even if projects hadn't been built, there would have been habitat loss.**
I see charge to us as looking back to core conditions for endangered species and other communities. Not necessarily to replicate. Where are we now? What will happen? How should we modify our course now?

**Eminent domain, can you create ecosystem you desire without acquiring more land?**
Right now, program is on a willing seller basis. Other options – maybe through voluntary enrollment. Could be floodplain forest management or other creative solutions.

## 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. Future scenarios / Visioning

Individuals wrote down their personal visions for the Missouri River in 2050, then shared them with their small group. Each small group answered two questions: What is your vision for a restored Missouri River? What can't fit into your common vision?

### Table A – Group Vision

Flip chart pages:

- Boat ramp and public docks and parks for each community – create more access

- Clean drinking water – no chemical pollutants
- More products imported/exported through better navigation
- More hydro-powered electricity plus other sustainable energy sources along the river
- Improved flood control and fluctuation – reliable flows
- Communities improving their cultural heritage and eco/recreational tourism
- Dynamic use of harvesting of aquatic life without "overfishing" and healthier (tumor-free) fish to eat
- Reduce waste impact on the river through use of wetlands ecosystems / forests, etc.
- Proper sedimentation control – more if needed / less if needed
- Preserve rich farmland
- River as class5room – learning nature from nature – students of all ages
- Eradicate or significantly reduce non-native species, both flora and fauna
- Remove the anthroprogenic causes for species 'winners and losers'
- Keep the federal government from acquiring or condemning large tracts of river-edge property
- Create communities with balance – self-sustaining uses even if partly in conflict
- Create inland waterways research institute
- Make water cleaner when it "leaves" the city than when it entered the city
- Plan for emergencies and build for emergencies. Reduce sandbagging – design for floods
- No dead zone
- Increase barge traffic and make more communities viable ports
- Return passenger vehicles like paddle-wheelers to the river
- Increase biking and hiking trails

Notes from small group discussion

- "We cannot take that amount of dollars out of the economy." Participant discussing the impact of the federal government owning large tracts of land.
- "Is the water that leaves your town cleaner than when it comes into your town? In 2050, we should be able to make the water cleaner when it leaves."
- "I have done enough sandbagging. I am sick and tired of sandbagging. Let's plan for emergencies."

- “When I was growing up, there were houses up and down the river. Every three or four years they’d move out, then they’d move back. They were river rats.” (The term “river rats” was used affectionately several times throughout the day.)
- “At one point it was more important to put millions of dollars into building these dams. Now it’s important to put millions into doing this.”
- “It’s a misperception that clean is good. Sediment is needed and clean isn’t necessarily good.”
- “The conservation department buys up a lot of land and doesn’t necessarily manage it. It creates no benefit to anyone.”
- “We’re the only country in the world to turn its back on the navigation needed to sustain our population.”

**Table B – Group Vision**

Flip chart pages:

- What would be different?
    - No more flood plain development
    - Letting river grow to proper width versus channelizing it
    - Hydrolic modeling to identify proper carrying capacity
    - Restore to flood carrying capacity
    - Improve the rural economies through recreation and tourism
    - More diversity with native plants and species
- What conditional features?
    - Watershed management
    - Navigation possible – reduces carbon footprint
    - Water quality improved
    - Wetlands / Natural filtration
    - Stability and predictability of 100-year floods, etc.
- How do people connect to the river?
    - Perception of the river is more positive
- What values are in conflict?
    - Preservation of Missouri River communities versus flood plain development moratoriums
    - Conflict between interests of fish & wildlife department versus corps of engineers
    - Private ownership versus government ownership (private property rights)

    - Reach out to under-represented ethnic groups who don't participate in the Missouri River
    - Conflicts among states
    - Missouri interests and control of Missouri River assets versus pumping to dry Western states

**Table C – Group Vision**

Flip chart pages:

- Historic significance
    - More exhibits
    - Accessible
    - Friendly, inviting
    - Vistas – pull-outs emphasizing Lewis & Clark, other history
- Navigability maximized to the best of its ability – decreased road traffic, especially trucking.
    - The Missouri River is not the Mississippi. Navigation is different on the Missouri River.
        - There are different styles of barges.
        - Approach it differently.
    - Three rivers – the Upper Missouri is different from the Lower Missouri.
- Different policies for different stretches of the river.
    - It's good we're having conversations at different points of the river.
- National park designation for certain stretches
    - But – that could be opening Pandora's Box.
    - Some success in creating a water trail.
    - National Heritage Site?
    - Great River Road – DNR doing the water trail right now with maps for people to experience the river
- Vision key words
    - Appreciated as a living community. Live in harmony. Natural in some places; accept human use in others. Corps efforts have not worked – for example, the river levels are still out of control.
    - Viability needs to be addressed. The Corps paid triple the value to buy the land – who can compete with that? If we create more natural spaces, how do we get the land to do that? What is fair? Tax dollars compete with private investment.

- Economics must enter into the conversation. Everything that gets done has to cost something. Ex: habitat creation = consequences (dead zones). Need collaborative discussions with non-biased science. Valid science includes experimentation.
- Much interconnectivity
- Is there a way to create "jewels" along the river? Worth taking it back to what Lewis & Clark saw? Then build local economies along the other stretches?
- Water quality. Can we eliminate the concept of waste?
- Emphasize what's unique to the communities along the river.
- Less flooding
- Navigation cheaper
- Increased access for recreation
- Human needs need to come first. Most of the discussion is related to the plight of the sturgeon. Endangered Species Act is the driving force behind this. You can't save everything. The cost of saving something might outweigh the cost of not saving it. Wetlands help some with flooding, but not as much because the water moves in the river – so it will still come down. Not sure hwo much effect it has on flooding.
- More fully realizes potential to the economy – works with nature as much as possible
- River is an asset. We need asset management more than species rehabilitation. BUT…if a fish has lived there for a million year sand can't anymore, there's a problem there. We have a responsibility to be caretakers, but it can't go to the extreme. Let's get rid of the big swings. Dollars are a short-term solution, and not the only metric.
- How do we balance differing human "claims" on the river?
- The river has taken the hits. The river has had to sacrifice. In 50 years, let's see a river without further damage.
- We should be able to eat fish from the river
- Jewels
- Viable commercial traffic
- Sustainable agriculture production
- Watch the development (further development). More concrete = more flooding. We need less run-off.
- We need more talk about the tributaries – it has to be a holistic approach. Want a broader view.

- Areas of conflict

    - Different perspectives – who wins? People or the river? Personal or systematic? Is there another way?
- Consensus on…
    - Sustainable utilization. We need balance.

**Table D – Group Vision**

Flip chart notes:

- Public and school children on the river
- People are cleaning up the river with beautification efforts
- More points of safe access
- All river interests working together
- Rethinking and revitalization of the navigation industry – different types of boats that work on the Missouri River
- More parks and conservation areas
- Sandbars are full of campers
- All levees protect for 500-year floods – protect farms, roads, bridges, infrastructure
- Native fish are recovered
- A commercial fishing industry exists – turning jumping carp into cat food
- River guides ply the river – community access points are all along the river
- Responsible development in the flood plain
- Irresponsible development washed away and not replaced
- Combined sewer outflows fixed – the river is safe for swimming

**Individual visions**

We provided a worksheet and asked people to write their individual vision for the Missouri River in 2050. Individuals shared their visions within their small groups, and the small groups created a group vision. All the legible individual visions are included below.

- There would be people working together – agriculture, recreation and transportation – to educate more people about the river.
- I'd like to see a different type of navigation industry – shallower draft vessels – carrying goods and people – connecting river towns with restored riverfronts. The river connects with its flood plain in high water via public and privately held conservation areas – and between Boonville and the mouth of the Osage – a new unit of the NPS Missouri National Recreation River.

- I would hope to see a Missouri River that has once again become a living, active part of people's lives, both for the local residents and for visitors. A stable, somewhat more natural river valley would have regular use for farming, fishing, shipping, boating and tourism with more native animals and plants to be enjoyed by all.
- Cleaner water, less debris along the river's edges. Water levels controlled. City people using river on a regular basis for recreation. More access points and comfort / gas stations (every 10-20 miles). Wildlife abundant for all to enjoy.
- The river flow has become more stable and predictable. 100-year floods are 100-year floods. The channel is deeper and maintained, levees are maintained. Navigation is common from St. Louis to KC. Commercial fishing is restored. More public river access, parks and campsites. A common sense balance between endangered species – people – agriculture and economics has been reached. The corps manages the river – NOT fish & wildlife! Not dumping dirt in the river. The river is cleaner, safer and stable.
- The single biggest change would be to restore flood-carrying capacity. This would reduce devastating flood heights. Ideal restoration would include communities connecting to the river – providing opportunity for people to access the river or simply sit on the bank and watch the river. Note: Flood-carrying capacity is restored by moving levees back several hundred feet and backing away from channel maintenance to a small degree so the river could become slightly wider.
- A gentle blending of agricultural and aquatic wetlands. Thriving small towns catering to recreation, eco- and agritourism. A place that urban dwellers go to in order to get away. A place devoid of urban sprawl, billboards and eight-lane divided highways. A national treasure appreciated in the hearts of Americans on part with more well-known national parks.
- 1) More back water, move islands and sandbars. 2) Large snags of logs in the water. 3) Large forest of native plants in the bottoms. 4) Tax credits for landowners with forests. 5) Still room for agriculture, factory, power & (can't read). 6) Perception of the river more positive.
- More slackwater areas. More WRP. Restore flood-carrying capacity. Return to historic floodplain – more wetlands, biodiversity restored, urban run-off controlled, levees/farming best ever, barge traffic up 50%, perception of healthy river seen as integral to healthy enjoyment of and living as parks/bike trails provide better/more river access.
- In the past 40 years, many of the eco changes are not invisible to those who view the river. They are hidden yet have come back to the national state, but it has taken 40 years. The river is still uncontrollable but we have adapted with greater flood plains, etc. Communities continue to be more aware of the importance of this natural attraction. But to simply look upon the river – it hasn't changed visually.
- Deeper channels for boat traffic. Non-native species are gone and native species are restored. Communities have regular access to the river. Good transportation.

River flow is more reliable. People are using the river more; tourism increases. Set aside wetlands for birds and other wildlife.

- The Missouri River would be appreciated as a living community, sustaining the natural and built environment. Human and natural communities would live in harmony with the river's natural cycles, modified for human benefit in some locations and left to its own devices in others. Humans are encouraged to become familiar with the river without destroying the natural features that attract us to the river in the first place.
- By 2050 there will no longer be any waste in the Missouri River ecosystem. There will be a series of Lewis & Clark heritage sites restored to CA. 1804 conditions, while towns and businesses have developed sustainable economies based upon resource conservation and restoration.
- The river has met many expectations. It floods less, the cost of freight has become has expensive that it is utilized for transport more fully. People who choose to recreate along the river have adequate access to do that. However, in the end the diverse needs of man do come first.
- "Missouri River Corridor National Park" Anything less than that is a compromise to me (personally), but a necessary compromise, of course. Long stretches of river in its natural flood plain, thick populations of wildlife, the river gurgling with fish. Still, there would be agriculture, barge traffic and water treatment – but all would be geared to work with the river, sustainably. No more bending the river to human will.
- The biggest change would be a recognition by all stakeholders of the direct and indirect costs whenever the river is altered. If we truly understood that, a well-managed river would happen quickly. Most important, we need to allow the river to breathe again. It can heal itself if allowed to spread out and fill more closely its original valley. We need to adapt more to the river rather than try to adapt the river to our perceived needs.
- A river system which more fully realizes its potential to contribute to our state and national economy. This potential being realized in concert with the natural world as much as possible/practical, but not hindered by excessive desires to achieve wild habitat. Economic contributions include navigation, power generation, tourism.

## 2:30-3:30. Moving forward – large group discussion

**When you think about the Missouri River, what are the problems?**

- Changing flood levels
    - Eliminates portions of communities
    - Can't invest in communities

- Lack of current flood maps
- Net loss of wetlands
- Flooding (flood carrying capacity)
- Diminishing barge traffic
- Water intakes
- Artificial water rises
- Uncertain capacity of river (impacts Mississippi)
- Lack of recreational access (docks, parks, etc.)
- Lack of public knowledge of the Missouri River and MRERP
- Threat to small towns
- Threat to farmers
- Unintended consequences (of managing the river)
- Unagreed-upon, flawed and lack of science
- Uncoordinated / Too many federal agencies
- Poor cooperation and collaboration
- Unappreciated interconnectedness of natural systems
- Lack of enlightened social cost/benefit analysis
- Lack of quality-of-life indicators
- Lack of comprehensive GIS
- Lack of current navigation charts
- National prioritization
    - Overriding Missouri River
    - Foreign assistance
- Politics

A few quotes from large-group listing of problems:

- "In St. Charles County, they've been changing the flood plain from 500-year flood plain to 100-year. When they do that, if county gets federal flood insurance funds, you can't invest in the flood plain. When I asked, was told the idea is for those communities to go away. As they raise levels, more portions of towns like Portland will go away. Federal government says you can't invest in your property. That's a federal death warrant on these properties. These communities will go away. You can't get building permits, investment permits, even if you don't want insurance."
- "We're working with flood map developed in early 1990's. We don't have a current map in Hartsburg."

- “How do you put a correct value on one portion of study without overshadowing another portion?”
- “What is the Coast Guard doing on the Missouri River? There are too many agencies involved.”
- “Everything is connected and when you do something for navigation, it may impact small towns, et cetera.”
- “When you take the economic impact into account, you have to also see that not everything has a dollar figure attached to it. Quality of life issues like being able to sit next to river don’t have a dollar figure attached to them.” “We used to call that enlightened social cost benefit analysis.”

**When you think about the Missouri River, what are the opportunities?**

- Short term and long term list of opportunities needed.
- Use this opportunity to educate people, kids, not just fixing the river.
- Reinvent barges – smaller and shallower barges rather than trying to adapt Mississippi barges to Missouri.
- Blue Marine Highway – look it up, one proposal.
- If you reinvent it, it would be nice to give barge industry some money – spend a lot of money on dikes, but do we ever ask how we could help navigation industry?
- As a nation, we’re sending shallow-draft riverboats to other parts of world so they can develop their inland waterways – other countries see the need and fund it. They buy our old antiquated equipment.
- Why? All goes back to payload. Blue Marine Highways is the way the federal government is addressing this. Asking us to be innovative in how we can do this.
- MRERP, MRRIC, having a science-based community come together to study and implement, create databases, opportunities to create capacity to enable proper science, collection and dispensation.
- Let’s quit studying – we in industry have to make a decision. I’ve been going to these meetings for 30 years. Got to have decision makers come to these meetings.
- End the meeting by deciding to have a next meeting.
- Too much US foreign aid. (Someone else said foreign aid had been cut back greatly.)
- To not demonize each other and realize we all have the same goals, mostly, to have a clean river. Let the river win every once in a while.
- I’d like to see my kids get out on the river.
- Good funding for Missouri tourism. Branson, Mo., wine industry is a good example. Refocus some of that – get people to go from Herman, to Rocheport, rather than just going to Branson. Ride bikes, get on river.

- Katy Trail shelters in town.
- Not a lot of high-end opportunities on Katy Trail – not catering to youth. Need more low-cost activities especially for young people.
- Need one agency that can say how its going to be – one voice.
- Corps should be the voice – without other agencies pulling them in different directions.
- Different viewpoint – need to have discussion.
- Different guy – we've already discussed all this. Someone needs to make a decision.
- Discussion is going no place because everyone is marking their territory.
- This is an opportunity to reinvent America. This is where it started, and now a lot of these little towns are played out. I don't think our metro areas are sustainable, so it's a great opportunity to restore these little towns to health. Restore main streets and provide green blue-collar jobs.
- What we're dealing with now is the result of the 100-year master plan. We have an opportunity to look on longer time scale so the next generation doesn't have to sweep up behind us again.

**What natural resources should the restoration take into account?**

- Native plant species along the Missouri River bottoms. Only Ft. Leavenworth has native bottomland. Original forest had multiple species, ferns. Most have disappeared. Needs to be preserved and then transplanted.
- Reintroduction of Asian carp.
- Increase in water birds, herons and egrets. Wetlands are bringing birds back. They were practically gone, now back. Turkeys too.
- Sand is a natural resource. In Kansas City, lowering of streambed. Streambed is going down. Assume sand harvest has something to do with that. The more sediment we pull out, the less there is.
- We've lost 10 feet in 50 years in KC at big turn downtown. Why? River doesn't want to go there anymore. Also aren't letting silt go down.
- The river is starved for sediment.
- Reintroduced river otter for state of Missouri, now 20,000 of them, reproducing like rabbits.
- No big bass left in holding ponds anymore.
- On lower Meramec, there are three species of mussels. Scaley shell muscle, if want to have some, come and get them because lead is coming down the river and will threaten them.

- Fertile soil was always a natural resource but we could run out of it. Does that lead to more fertilizer use?
- Snags have disappeared from the river – slow down the water and allow wildlife to reproduce. We should allow snags.
- Dioxin and other problems coming off of pavement – toxins in urban runoff.
- Benefit to farming in bottoms, because soil is richer, higher yields with less chemicals.
- Does global warming have an impact? Answer from participants – Yes, in terms of rising water levels. Increases in frequency and severity of flooding, increase in net amount of rain we get.

**What does "restoration" mean to you?**

- "A lot of times restoration is a pendulum swing to an extreme. Something put upon a person. I'm not against endangered species but am against taking restoration to an extreme. No one says how much money we will spend on it or how long we will spend on it."
- Need to have a target defined.
- "I think restoration means regulation. More rules of what you can and can't do."
- "Restored back to what? To what point back in time? Just to say restoration, doesn't mean anything."
- "To me it's exciting to have a chance to see nature run her course a little, but I don't want to see it at the expense of people who are already on the river. We need farmers, we need barges. In the Midwest we have never really done that. We need to let it go a little bit."
- "From the preservation commission, we need to keep the river viable, preserve the river as meaningful part of life."
- "My suggestion is, don't have adults at these meetings anymore, have school children."
- The problem is in Washington DC, agencies and bureaucrats
- "To survive in industry, you have to plan ahead. Government agencies don't have to adapt. Shooting targets when you don't know what you're shooting at."
- "Restoration is sustainable utilization."
- "I have to give a shout out for government. I've been watching Ken Burnes' special on national parks. Government has done amazing things. I also get frustrated by these scoping sessions. Pabulum – telling us something is happening while restoration is going on. That said, only government can make big things happen."
- No net loss of wetland acreage or function.

- Will get a new set of water quality standards.
- We agreed to the Clean Water Act – that's the law of the land. The Corps works for me.
- "Restoration means taking back to some previous point in time, but can't do that to living community like the Missouri River basin ecosystem. You can take it back to health. Has to do with environment, cultural heritage, economics. Have to come up with commensurate measures to say what's worth how much. We made a start today but it's probably the toughest one anyone can do."
- "Agriculture and feeding people is important. When land is converted it's hard to convert it back."
- Provided by Tom Ball after the meeting: "Restoration of the Missouri River would mean to me: compliance with all state and federal laws, including but not limited to The Clean Water Act of 1972; including Water Quality Standards implemented by law in the various states; The Endangered Species Protection Act of 1973; Executive Order 11988; Executive Order 11990; The national policy of "no net loss of wetlands acreage an function" set forth by President George H W Bush and affirmed by every President since 1989; and such other laws which, in past or future, the people may see fit to instantiate as the law of the land."

**Observer comments**

- Bill Lay – member of MRRIC. If we understand the operation of the river, we probably won't have so many different views. Have diverse views here today. I've been talking to folks upriver. We have little disagreement. We need to enforce the spring pulse without damage to the downstream interests.
- Paul Warner, Missouri Department of Conservation. We're on the fish-chasing side of this operation. On pallid sturgeon assessment project, assess the fish community. Small cog in wheel. Lots of questions about how you measure restoration. How do you measure success? From the pallid sturgeon standpoint, goal is to have self sustaining population. How that's one small measure in the restoration plan.
- Ken Reeder, St Joseph, MRRIC. Upper basin drives conflict between upper and lower basin. The sedimentation level less than when Lewis and Clark came down river.

**Large-group meeting evaluation**

What went well

- Process was well organized
- Good time management
- Diverse group of people
- Informative, educational
- Good mix of people
- Pretty good respect for people's opinions

- No one was hurt
- “I was glad to see all the economic aspects of the river discussed. Usually it’s all about fish and birds at these meetings, but we didn’t talk so much about endangered species this time.”
- I learned something – it’s important to hear different perspectives

What could be improved

- Discuss fish and birds more
- Assumption that the Corps can fix what has occurred, and maybe some things are better left alone.
- Still not clear on objective of meeting and product to come from it and how this information will be used.
- Would have liked to see prioritization of vision – boil it down to what five things we’d like to see, compare to upriver.

**MRERP Civic Engagement Meetings Fall 2009**

**Final Report**

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# Attachment K

## Kansas Report

Report prepared by: Dan Kahl and David Procter October 2009

**Kansas State University**
**Institute For Civic Discourse and Democracy**
**Civic Engagement Report**

## Introduction:

The Kansas State University (KSU) Institute for Civic Discourse and Democracy (ICDD) facilitated a public forum to gather feedback and ideas from Kansas citizens on Saturday, October 3, 2009 in Atchison, Kansas. Sixteen citizens participated in the session along with observers from the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, the Army Corps of Engineers (2), the Cooperating Agency Team (1), a representative from Louis Berger (1) and from the US Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution (2). Participants represented farming (3) Pheasants Forever (1), citizen volunteers on Basin Advisory Committees (2), Citizens representing Watershed Restoration And Protection Strategy groups (3), the Benedictine Abby (1), the Yacht Club (1), Friends of the KAW (river environmental group) (1), municipal water supplier (1), teacher (1) and retired citizens (2). While these were their primary affiliation - many mentioned multiple connections with the river.

## METHODOLOGY

Interested citizens were identified through the networking assistance of K-State Research and Extension county agents, community improvement volunteers in the Kansas PRIDE program network, river vicinity city and chamber staff, leadership program networks, and through the support of state agencies including the Kansas Water Office and the Kansas Department of Health and Environment. Special interest groups were also identified including; the Kansas Canoe Association, Friends of the KAW, Pheasants Forever, Yacht Clubs, and municipal and rural water suppliers. Observer invitations were also shared with the representatives of the CAT, MRRIC, and State agencies working with water issues. Participant invitations were sent by mail to 88 invitees with a request to share the names of others that they knew may be interested. Invitations were personalized and many varied slightly depending on relationships with the invitee. A sample invitation letter is attached in the appendices of this document. Phone calls or personal visits were made to Research and Extension agents, and observers with requests to assist in identifying possible participants. In addition to the above, a newspaper article was shared in the Atchison paper to alert community members of the upcoming event. (See Appendix E for copy of the Atchison newspaper notice).

Facilitation Methodology

It was felt that a mixing of process would best engage participants during this forum. During the forum, we used individual reflection, paired discussion, small group discussions, and large group dialogue processes. To accomplish this, ICDD employed three facilitators for the forum. The meeting started out

with a welcome, clear stating of objectives for the day (the purpose of the meeting) followed by an opportunity for participants to introduce themselves. We asked participants and observers to check in on a map of the state and when introducing themselves, we asked them to share: their name, show us on the map where they are from; and tell us briefly their connection or interest in the Missouri River. This approach was intended not only to provide an introduction, but was also intended to establish a ground work of understanding of the many perspectives and investments that people are bringing to the table. Introductions were followed by the Army Corps of Engineers presentation about the Missouri River Environmental Restoration Planning process and how the public engagement meetings were a part of the process. We believe that these elements are vital to establishing a productive environment for citizen involvement:

- Letting people know why they are meeting,
- understanding who else is in the room and invested in the process, and
- understanding the parameters of expectations of the meeting (including agreeing on ground rules)

Following the MRERP presentation by the Army Corps Representatives, we broke into table discussion groups for the values identification exercise. Three table groups (two of five people, one of six) were convened to discuss values. One ICDD facilitator went with each table group. Each table group was given 15 minutes to discuss Social Context and Identity; then 15 minutes to address Community related values; then 15 minutes to address economic vitality. The table facilitator at each table recorded conversations. In addition, US Institute of Environmental Conflict Resolution recorders captured the conversations in the table groups. The specific questions followed are included in the facilitation draft included in the appendices.

Following the three table conversations, the notes from each table conversation was posted on the wall. The facilitators quickly recapped the table conversations and the group was asked to identify common value themes from the table reports for each topic area. This process provided participants a small group setting to discuss what they value (full participation) – but allowed common themes to be visible to the whole group in the report out. The end result was a lot of sharing time – with a list of values from the large group.

We asked the group to begin the visioning process individually by writing on note cards a response to this question:

**"What is your vision for a restored MO River? What conditions and features would be present?"** As you think fifty years into the future, if we got things right, what would the river look like?

Individuals wrote their visions on note cards, and were encouraged to state the ideal in the present affirmative – as a descriptive statement of the ideal river. Participants then shared their ideas with a partner that they had not visited with yet. Once written and collected, vision statement ideas were shared with the entire group.

Following the visioning activity, the whole group was asked to identify actions and activities needed to move us forward. The first exercise was to record current issues and opportunities related to current river management strategies. These were shared in a full group forum, with one facilitator asking questions, and two recorders captured comments on flip charts, one recording Issues and one recording opportunities.

The final activity was to identify natural resource indicators by which progress could be measured.

Identifying Natural Resource Indicators was introduced by Brian Manwaring of the Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution, and then facilitated again as a large group activity.

**Outcomes: Values Discussion**

**Social context**

A common thread in the values discussion was a reflection on what the river used to be and how that has changed. Comments reflected that many communities ***defined themselves*** as river communities- and were settled by people coming up the river. The river gave ***people identity and a sense of place***, or at least initially it did. It was reflected that now the access to communities is everything but river access. Despite these comments, people identified themselves by which side of the river they lived, and how far they were from the river. An appreciation of the aesthetic and scenic value of the river was also expressed.

In our conversations, the Missouri River had practical significance – as indicated by people mentioning the need for ***water for drinking and fish for eating.*** The value of the river for fishing, and food supply was highlighted, as well as the riverine species of plants, and animals that live in the Missouri River system.

The river also held ***social and recreational significance***. The importance of the river for boating, recreation, and social connections for boaters was highlighted, as well as the river being a family outing destination. Today is the MO River clean up event. That's a social event for cleanup, there are other events, trying to bring awareness to the river.

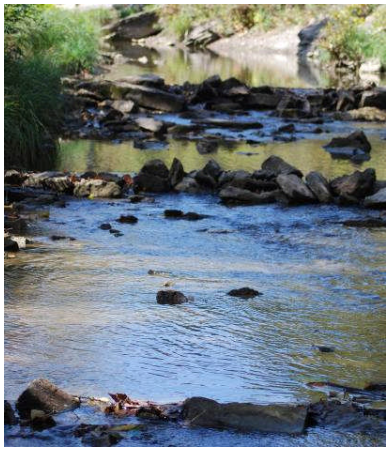
Some mentioned the ***spiritual significance*** of the river – and commented how it provided peace and a place for reflection.

It was suggested that the river holds ***historical significance*** as participants described how people, places, agriculture, industry, and society were intertwined with the history of the river.

**Community context**

***Recreational access to the river*** is a very important value to individuals and communities. Participants commented on the river being used for community celebrations including picnics and festivals. Limited access is a concern for recreation, fishing, and boating.

The River is seen as having value for ***tourism.*** Participants noted that the river is a "selling point" of communities when recruiting. They focus on the river presence and the activities.



There was an indication that the river used to be valued more for ***industry.*** Discussions focused on the reduction of commercial river traffic, and how some of the river front community economies were based on river traffic.

Water use for ***drinking and irrigation*** came up again as important values. Fish from the river was identified as a ***food source*** for disadvantaged populations.

While not a recurring theme, use of the river for ***educational*** efforts and ***energy*** production were also identified as possible values.

**Economic context**

Participants noted that some communities exist because of ***barge traffic and river industry***. It was a shared understanding that the economy of barge traffic and navigation has changed.

There was frustration expressed by some representing the agricultural community. Changes in river use reflected an element of the de-appreciation for the small farmer. Comments reflected that use of bottomland was ***important for food production***.

***Tourism and recreation*** were recognized as important assets the river provides.

Participants acknowledged that ***flood control*** and water for ***irrigation*** were two very significant ways the river impacted agriculture.

***Community Riverfront development*** and attraction was an economic value the group would like to see more of.

**Purpose and Need Statements**

Facilitator asked participants in large group setting to identify Key Issues or Problems they currently see with the way the river is managed. They were then asked to identify Key opportunities they saw relating to the future use and management of the river. General synopsis of the comments are listed below, with full notes included in the appendices.

Issues:

- Adequate/consistent water supply
- Conflicting Priorities
- Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acres coming out of reserve
- Water Quality – pollution
- Land use in flood/drainage areas
- Conflicts in Public-private use interest

- Economic interests
- Unclear on measurement - what constitute species recovery?
- How far can we go for restoration?
- Maintaining authorized uses of river
- Public involvement (lack of), apathy
- River buffer, dead zone.

What Opportunities do you see for River Management?

- We can positively affect the river with land use changes.
- Increased public education and a shifting of priorities.
- CRP to work with landowners to work in permanent vegetation for a riparian buffer.
- Land erosion is prevented by vegetation and vegetation is needed along banks.
- Scenic, recreational – development for tourism or public enjoyment.
- Would like to have facilitates/fueling stations along river for longer term recreational trips. Building permits in the food plain is impossible. Floating marina might be possible.
- Multiple benefits. Species habitat project provides recreation and access. Protects water and power supplies, habitat, reduced the amount of water that needs to be reduced from reservoirs, benefiting hydro-electric and navigation in the summer. There are opportunities for win-win projects.
- Multipurpose benefits benefiting multiple entities. We are all in the same river. Not competition, we need collaboration.
- Creative and innovative thinking by NGOS and other non-profits (Ducks Unlimited, Pheasants Forever). Pheasants Forever group is purchasing the CRP lands.
- Need more participation from minorities and Native Americans – have had more experience than we have over many years; having more diversity at the meetings.
- Education through water festivals.

**Natural Resource and Restoration Indicators – How will we measure success or progress with our natural resource?**

- Water quality – can be measured by TMDLS
- Species – recording diversity and measuring it against historical data
- Reduced sedimentation – measuring turbidity/visibility
- Invertebrate life – species count for population quantity and diversity
- Diversity of species – which might include:
    - Gooseberries
    - Paw paws (banana trees)
    - Butterfly milkweeds
    - Native Mollusks
    - River otter
- More sandbars and wildlife on sandbars
- More meanders in the river bed
- More backwater channels or side channels

**Future Visioning**

Qualitative description of **future visioning**, with picture or exercises scanned and included for reference in the description. (See Appendix D for full reporting of vision statements)

Key Vision Comments included: (with number of similar visions indicated with (D))

- *Green river, original flora and fauna and species reestablished. (2)*
- *River has access back to the flood plain. Natural river with sandbars-Meanders and oxbows back to its natural state. (2)*
- *Genuine multi purpose river with barge, recreation, bank stabilization, with also species supported in the river.*
- *Meanders, abundant access, fisheries restored, barge industry is secondary in a dedicated canal, and third, integrate (or acquire?) controlled low-land flooding areas with compensation to protect communities.*
- *River more positive economic impact on communities – on tourism. New ways of using it among cities (such as boat marinas or fueling stations for smaller recreational boating travel on the river).* (3)
- *Be a balance of beautiful and functional. Provide for our needs, but show respect for its own integrity.*
- *Source of energy and utilities, balanced with nature and wildlife.*
- *Better Water Quality and wildlife. Less sediment.*
- *Want the river to look like it does at Ponca State Park in Nebraska, upstream of Sioux City – with all those natural features.*

**Appendix A**
**Sample Letter of Invitation:**

September 4, 2009

Troy PRIDE
Amy Masters
235 S. Liberty
Troy, KS 66087

Dear Amy and interested PRIDE representatives,

We are writing to ask your help in charting the future of the Missouri River. The U.S. Water Resources Development Act of 2007 directs that there be a comprehensive study of the Missouri River and its tributaries to guide long-range planning for mitigation, recovery, and restoration efforts in the Missouri River basin.

As part of this study, Kansas State University's Institute for Civic Discourse and Democracy is coordinating a listening forum to hear from citizens about their ideas for current and future Missouri River management. This forum is an opportunity for citizens who care about the river to come together and participate in a focus group experience. Our goals for the meeting include:

- Identifying what you value about the river,
- Identifying how you would like to see the river and management of the river improved,
- Identifying your vision of the Missouri River and goals to achieve that vision

This is an opportunity for your ideas to be part of a process that will guide future river management strategies. Results from the Kansas focus group will be shared with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers who are conducting a study of the entire Missouri River basin. Similar listening forums are being held in each state along the river. The results of our Kansas meeting will become an integral part of the national conversation charting the future of the Missouri River.

As someone connected to the river through community improvement work in Troy, we would like to invite you to this forum meeting at the **Atchison Heritage Conference Center, Atchison, Kansas on October 3rd, 2009**. The meeting will begin at 10:00 a.m. and will conclude at 4:00 p.m. Lunch will be arranged. Please RSVP **by September 20th** and let us know if you will be able to join us. You can contact us via phone, mail, or email. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Dan Kahl, Facilitator
Institute for Civic Discourse
and Democracy

David Procter, Facilitator
Institute for Civic Discourse
and Democracy

**Appendix B**
**RSVP Note to participants and Observers**

# Charting the Future of the Missouri River Basin: A Focus Group Meeting RSVP

**Where:** Atchison Heritage Conference Center
710 S 9th St
Atchison, KS

**When:** October 3, 2009
10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Please RSVP by September 20, 2009. You may RSVP via email or phone. Our contact information is:

U.S. mail: Institute for Civic Discourse and Democracy
202 Ahearn
Kansas State University
Manhattan, KS 66506
Phone: (785) 532-6868
Email: cecd@ksu.edu

Thank you for your interest in the future of the Missouri River!

**Appendix C**
**MRERP Public Meeting Agenda and Facilitation Plan**

# MRERP Civic Engagement Meetings
# Draft Agenda

**Missouri River Environmental Restoration Plan**
**(MRERP)**
**Public Forum**
**October 3, 2009**

**Draft Facilitation Plan:**

Public Forum Objectives:

1) To educate the participants on the MRERP
2) To gather in-depth public input on key elements of the Missouri River Ecosystem Restoration Plan (MRERP) Scoping Process
3) To foster dialogue and discussion among different communities of interest and place
4) To improve the connection among the stakeholders, communities, and the Missouri River

- Gather input from citizens regarding how they value the Missouri River related to social context; community context; and economically.
- Gather vision concepts from citizens relating to the river.
- Gather feedback regarding issues, opportunities, and management strategy ideas.

Schedule:

10:00 Greeting – Dan/Dave/Charlie
Share Workshop objectives, Ground rules and schedule for the day – Dan and Dave
Group sign in on Map of Kansas with a colored pen – and introduces themselves
-Name
-Interest or affiliation with the river.
Clarify role of Observers – Dan and Dave

**Purpose:** Orients group to one another, creates an environment of common expectation.
**Process**: Facilitators will allow each of the participants to stand up, show where they are from on the map, and tell their relationship to the river. Facilitators will start to model the exercise, then ask each person in the room to do the same.
**Payoff:** Clarity of roles, process, and common expectation and understanding of the day.

10:30 Introduce Brian and Sasha who will, in turn, introduce ACE representatives. Followed by Power point overview of the process and planning.

- Overview and purpose of MRERP process
- Roles and Expectations
- Missouri River Basin Management Lessons Learned

**Purpose:** To establish the context of the activities that we are involved in today.

**Process:** Brian or ACE representative leads the PowerPoint presentation.
**Payoff:** Provides summary of process thus far, and frames how the work of today fits into the flow of overall feedback and decision-making processes.
11:15 Values Exercise
**Purpose:** To understand values related to the Missouri River held by the public.
**Process:** We will ask participants to sit in 3 table groups (Dan/Dave/Charlie). Each table group will be given 15 minutes to discuss Social Context and Identity; then 15 minutes to address Community related values; then 15 minutes to address economic vitality. The table facilitator at each table will record conversations.
The following questions will be asked:

Social Context and Identity

1. Based on your history with the river, what are the values and benefits of the MO River and its ecosystem?
2. What are your needs related to the MO River and are your needs being met?
    - What is the most important benefit you get from the river? How and why?
    - What are the specific practices or traditions that are central to these values?
    - As you Think about the identity of the river and its relationship to people – what is important to preserve?

Very briefly, ID any significant sub-groups in your community who might have a distinctly different response to this question than you. Just a word or two????

Community

3. What does the MO River mean to your community, state, and nation? How and why?
    - How does the MO River affect your community's quality of life?
    - How has the MO River shaped the culture of the community? How might the MO River shape the culture of the community into the future?
    - As you Think about communities and their relationship with the river– what is important to preserve?

Very briefly, ID any significant sub-groups in your community who might have a distinctly different response to this question than you. Just a word or two????

Economic Vitality

4. What does the MO River mean to your own and your community's/states economic vitality, diversity, and sustainability?
    - How would your community be economically impacted without the use of the MO River?
    - As you Think about the river and its relationship to economics – what is important to preserve?

Very briefly, ID any significant sub-groups in your community who might have a distinctly different response to this question than you. Just a word or two????

Following the three sessions, the notes from each table conversation will be posted. The group will be asked to identify common value themes from the table reports for each topic area.

**Payoff:** Provides participants a small group setting to discuss what they value (full participation) – but allows common themes to be visible in report out. End result is lots of sharing time – with a list of values from the large group.
12:30 – 1:00 Lunch
Shift Table groups (remix)
1:00 – 2:00 Future Scenarios/Visioning
**Purpose:** To contribute to the creation of a public vision for the future of the river.
**Process:** Facilitator leads individual – then group – activity on visioning.
Facilitator: "We have identified our values associated with the river ecosystem. Now I would like you to tell me how the future would look if we got it right.. if we were successful with our restoration goals. This next activity will allow us to get an idea of your vision for the future."

For example: " the river is full of catfish that people catch and eat" (add detail to make it sound like your vision of the future)

Individual Activity – participants are given note cards and pens/pencils. Each is asked to write a short, affirmative statement describing the ideal river (in statements as though it has already been achieved). One statement per card. Multiple cards are encouraged.

POST question on Wall to focus group thought: **"What is your vision for a restored MO River? What conditions and features would be present?"**
Participants write responses on note cards. Allow approximately 5 -8 minutes, or until everyone seems to have stopped writing.

**Payoff:** Creative, individual thinking and recorded statements about their vision for the river.

**1:12 – 1:30 Process:** Sharing of vision statements
Ask participants to share their cards with a partner at the table. Allow about 8 minutes (four each) for the pair to exchange their ideas about the vision of the river.
Next, ask each member to put their initials on the corner of their vision statement and bring their vision cards up to the Sticky Wall to post.
Participants share vision statements as they post them on the wall.

**Payoff:** Participants have a chance to discuss, refine, and clarify their ideas through sharing, then share with larger group with confidence.

1:40 **Facilitators:** Facilitate group clustering of vision ideas into theme areas. Ask if additional ideas surfaced through this process or discussion. This exercise should create vision themes.

1:50 – 2:30 Clarifying statements:
**Process:** Ask participants in their table groups to answer these questions for each of the vision theme areas:

- How would you measure successful restoration of the MO River ecosystem? (completion of the vision)
- What would be an indicator of full implementation of the vision?

**Payoff: Group provides ideas indicators of success – while clarifying their vision statements.**
Break: 2:20-2:30

2:40- 3:30 Moving Forward: Actions Discussion (shift table groups for a third time)
Building on our characteristics for the success – we turn our attention to current practices. In table groups: Have group members discuss the following. The table facilitator records ideas on flip chart.

1. What do you think are the **issues** that affect the MO River ecosystems?
2. What are the **opportunities** that exist that relate to those problems?
    - What should be changed or fixed?
    - What should the plan do?
    - What are the barriers?
3. What **natural resources** should be addressed or considered? What issue is of concern related to these resources?

Facilitators record three bulleted sheets for Issues, Opportunities, and Natural Resource Considerations.

4:00 – 4:15 Input from Observers
4:15 – 4:30 Next Steps and Closing –

- Discuss how the input from the meetings will be used in the study

## Appendix D
## Participant Vision Statements

DLH-River Floral and River Life Fit to Eat

MG-The "Muddy" MO will be the GREEN River. Original Flora and fauna and species will be reestablished

RB-The river has a variety of wildlife but still has regulated channels and depth. Everyone has access to the river in all the communities.

RB-The river would look similar to the way it looks now but with more wildlife. I would like to see the river cleaner. There would be more access to the river: more ramps and docks throughout the river north and south. Depth and channel the same.

The river operates as a natural system of sandbars, trees, pools, runs and riffles without corp improvements.

CG- The Missouri River is a resilient river system that responds to natural and minimal influence. It is a clean river supporting abundant life (in stream and overbank). It is accessible for all for both recreation and areas of solitude. It has navigation and water supply functions.

TS-A genuine multi-purpose river with bank and channel stabilized, a main channel supporting barge traffic and recreation and side channels providing habitat to recover the endangered species. Public access to the river.

MT-To have better water quality and wildlife habitat.

CL-Naturally operating system with sandbars, trees and other types of habitat that is more like the river was before corp modifications.

JLG-It should look like the Missouri River looks above Ponca State Parks. Edible fish, vibrant flora and fauna, we live in harmony with the river.

MH-The River is both beautiful and functional. It remains controlled, yet not impeded in its natural flow. We use it to provide for our needs, while showing respect for its own integrity.

I vision the river as being the main resource for energy and utilities with a balance preserved for nature and wildlife. Also there will be uses to agriculture and industry. I guess not a lot of change from the present.

R-River would have access to its flood plain. Flood plain development.

R- River is free flowing and flood plain serving its natural function as relief value.

CH-Values 50 years. That is would keep its present depth and its present channel. That it could be used with a more positive economic impact. That the river could have a more positive economic impact on its commercial by sharing business deals with other cities.

Wild appearance with meanders, abundant, edge effects, public access, wildlife and fisheries restored. Transportation in secondary or in parallel or secondary dedicated canal is reasonable. Integrate controlled complicated lowland flooding when necessary to protect populated areas.

Wider and no flooding. Lots of boat ramps available for public. Missouri river parks along bluff in Doniphan county. History including trails to cemeteries - such as Charston cemetery. Gas stations for boats, Iowa has a Loess Park; Public access to Missouri River; No gas stations exist between KCMO to Omaha. No towns along Missouri River, flood plain management. Decreased speed of river from Mh/H to what is future look like? Wider levees, relocated levees; no flooding; more purchases by corp engineers; such as Elwood, KS where H20 table is less than 4' (south of 36 highway). River degradation- move sand barges from up steam or downstream from where bridges are.

WW-The Missouri River Supports a fishery that has commercial value to the KC and STL region. Its return to natural year flooding, which is controlled by flooding where farmers are compensated. Wildlife and compensated public access supports a local economic effect and provides a healthy alternative to sedimentary lifestyle for youth and families. Water quality meets federal standards for intake to municipal water treatment facilities and sewage treatment likewise meets standards. Bay traffic is secondary.

## Appendix E
## Newspaper Notice Posted in *Atchison Globe*

**U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS**
**NOTICE OF FOCUS GROUP MEETING**

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), in partnership with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), is initiating a collaborative long-term study authorized by the Water Resources Development Act of 2007. The name of this study is the Missouri River Ecosystem Restoration Plan and Environmental Impact Statement (MRERP EIS). The result will be a fully integrated plan and environmental impact statement (EIS), prepared following National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and USACE planning guidance. Once completed, the MRERP will result in a policy/programmatic-level plan that will determine and describe high-level priorities and criteria for projects that address mitigation, recovery, and restoration of the Missouri River.

The USACE will hold focus group meetings for the MRERP EIS in locations throughout the Missouri River Basin to describe the project and the planning process, and to solicit input on the project scope, purpose and need, issues, and other related matters.

One of the focus group meetings will be held on October 3, 2009 from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. in Atchison, KS. This focus group meeting will include a small group of active participants accompanied by group of observers. This focus group activity is an exercise to trigger both active participants and observers to consider key scoping elements and hear different viewpoints. Participants for the focus groups will be identified beforehand and will reflect a diverse range of communities and interests in the basin. This focus group meeting is also open to observers. Although observers will not actively participate in the exercise, they will have an opportunity to provide input on the content and process they observed. Obtaining input from active participants as well as observers is a central purpose of these meetings. Space is limited. To reserve your space as an observer or for additional information about this focus group meeting, please send an e-mail to cecd@k-state.edu or (785)532-6868 by October 1, 2009.

Information pertaining to scoping and the overall project can be found on the web at www.mrerp.org. Written comments for scoping will be accepted until December 1, 2009.

Questions and comments specific to the project and EIS should be addressed to:
Jennifer Switzer
Project Manager
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
601 E. 12th Street
Kansas City, MO 64106
Email Address to Submit Comments: comments@mrerp.org

**Appendix F**
**Issues and Barriers to Missouri River Restoration**

Issues:

- Adequate H20 Supply
- Conflicting Priorities
- CRP Acres out of program
- Quality of Water (pollution)
- Lend use and drainage areas in watershed
- Public/Private Interests
- Economics
- Defining Species Recovery Success/Goals
- Habit Restoration (How far do we go?)
- Preserving authorized use of the River
- Public Involvement
- Land in the River Valley
- Sedimentation
- Access to River
- Barriers:
    - Flood plain Development
    - Depth of River
    - Private Property
    - Services (Lack of)
- Little Opportunity to Establish River Business
- Broader Public Participation
    - Barrier Leadership
    - Need personal Invitations

Creating Healthy System

- 50 foot floral edge, bumper corridor
- Sustainable and Sustained
- Edible Fish
- Ideas about Restoration

Values: Final Summary, What did we miss, not emphasize?

- Up & Down stream reservoirs and their impact on us here
- Impact we have downstream
- Impact of flooding

What is your VISION of at Restored Missouri River?
What Conditions and Features would be Present?

www. Mrerp.org

Restoration: means…

- Put it back like it was to begin with
- Provide sufficient habitat for native species while allowing use for humanities
- Edible fish
- Go back to specific historic healthy state
    - Isn't the point-river is dynamic-we need to understand health as resilience and changing
- 50 foot floral edges
    - From banks out
    - Healthy riparian corridor
    - Requires healthy water
- Sustainable
- Maintain where we're at current state
- Sandbars

Natural Resources (indicators of Success)

- Water Quality
    - Meet TMDL's
    - Reduced Sedimentation
- Species = Bull Snakes
    - Indicator Species
    - Invertebrates
- Diversity of Species
    - Gooseberry
    - PAW PAW
    - Butterfly Milkweed
    - Mollusks (Native)
- Recreationists
    - Swimmers/skiers/fishers
- Sandbars
- More Meanders
- Backwater Channels
    - Oxbows
    - Side Channels
- Waterfowl and Migratory Birds
- River Otter

<u>Opportunities in the process</u>

- Re: CRP-keep policies working pastures/
- Other land uses in permanent practices that contribute to reduce erosion and sedimentation and other water quality outcomes
- Also broader riparian and conservation practices might be enhanced
- Opportunity exists to better align land use policies and practices with MO River outcomes related to water quality and quantity

- Opportunity for greater participation by native Americans minorities of many types and develop more diverse and inclusive leadership
- Get more people involved in general
    - Personal Contacts
    - Use local base to invite people
- Opportunity for greater education about the river and river issues
- No Till is Ranked Higher than CRP
- Opportunity to develop activities with multiple benefits
    - Public involvement and public participation coupled with state support resources
    - Degradation improvements
    - (Shift in water flow, peaks, etc.)
- When people get out on river, they take more responsibility for the river and increase their involvement

<u>Barriers to realizing these opportunities</u>

- Entrenched special interests
- It is happening more often- due to improved local awareness coupled with state supports…we can do more
- Lack of familiarity with possible upstream impacts
- Restrictions on use of funds to single uses/benefits

Opportunity to bring conflicting concerns together for collaborative mutual solutions

- Barriers
    - Leadership
    - Ability to think outside the box

Opportunity to find new innovative solutions

- Opportunity for NGO's/Associations in partnerships with government agencies
    - Barriers
        - Economies (cost of fencing)
        - Bring land into/out of product
        - Tradition: land use habits, farming practices
        - USDA
        - Individual Rights vs. Public Good

Opportunity to Increase Public Education and Shift Priorities

- Barriers
    - Apathy (need better networking)
    - Gridlock
    - Gov't subsidies of inappropriate activities
    - Agencies and policies in conflict
    - Political process (gridlock)
    - Peer Pressure

**Appendix G**
**Values of Missouri River**

# Values the River Provides

Social Context

- Recreation
  - Fishing
  - Camping
  - Hiking
  - Hunting
  - Relation
  - Walking Trails
  - No Economic Travels
- River Community Celebrations
  - History
  - Walking Trails
- Public Health
  - Water for Communities
  - Waste Water
  - Irrigation
- Brings People together
- Spiritual value
- History as Access Points
  - New Social Side
  - River Fest
  - River Walks
- Boating
  - Social Life revolves around River
  - Growing Involvement
- Water itself is important resource
  - Drinking
  - Industrial
  - Ag
  - Cooling water for power plants
  - Water utility value
- Ecology
  - Effect on weather, rain
- Fishing (practices)
  - Especially with disadvantaged populations
  - Preservation
  - Water quality and supply
  - Other sub groups-Native –Spiritual
- Flooding
  - At times a big impact

        - 1993
        - Impact on most issues
    - Missed Value-No access
    - Changed River-Pollution and Degradation
    - Recreation/Food
        - Paw Paws
        - Native Fruits
        - Fisheries
        - Flora and Fauna
        - Catfish/ water fowl
        - Fur harvest
    - Diversity=Flora
    - Land Stewardship
    - Braided River=Diversity

Economic Impact

- Place to come –pleasant, brings thousands of people, helps shopping
- Peaceful, Relaxing=improved access is important
- Care for Existing Residence
- Bottom land provides rich soil for ag
- Produces variety of produce, crops
- Barge traffic brings economic value
- Live in Harmony with river-Lessons from Native Americans
- Provides employment
- Cost Transportation is transferred to farmer
- Fertilizer comes up River
- River Markets
- Early on, Eco Devo was very important.
    - Steamboats brought goods, people to area
- Lack of Navigation hurts
    - Depth of river is problem in places
    - Crooked
- Conflicting Interests
- Power Plants along river
    - Plants in KC
- A lot of unfilled potential
- Not a lot of Interest
    - Benefit does not equal cost, unknown
- Means: Dependence on the river
    - Ag-balance of wildlife, ecosystems, with agricultural land
    - Food Production may require Tradeoffs
    - Preserve drainage systems, flood plains as it has been developed
- Riverboat gambling
- Preserve Tourism and recreation
- Needs to Help Ag with additional tools to maximize Ag produces viability “cost shares, CRP style, Riparian zones
- Lack of Awareness in our communities about value of river impact
- Overall public works has economic value

- Bridges, pipelines, wash outs, bridge degradation, roads impacts when river washes down/reopens

Groups not necessarily represented at meeting

- Birders
- Power/Energy Companies
- Shoppers/Transporters
- Dredgers
- Port Authorities
- Levy Groups
- Riparian/Conservation Concerns

Community Impact

- Several communities exist because of river
- Communities define themselves as river towns
- Concern/Care for others
- Number of people make a living on the land
- Influence of rural population on stewardship
- Need many people working and caring for the land
- Who owns the river?
- Wild/muddy past… now see connections be broadly owned
- Shared ownership
- Shared stewardship
- River sense of home, place
- Healthy-linked to our health
- Need to clean it up
- Tourism-Identity
- Industry-fertilize plant depended on granges, also grain elevator
- Port Authority-much investment
- Drinking Water
- Quality of Life Impact
  - Sewage discharges, drinking water, recreation
- Water goes out to surrounding communities
  - Lawn irrigation, gas washing, swimming
  - Life blood of community
  - Aesthetic-view “just looking at it
  - disadvantaged populations who depend on food from river and ag bottom land
- Culture of Community
  - River is part of selling community recruitment of new people
  - River cleanup – involvements centered on health of river
- Festivals-events
- Docks and ports up and down river are important to traffic
- Power plants (hydro) vital to future
- Preserve: access
  - Ongoing human uses is so existence with environment aspects

Appendix H
Additional written comment from participants

Dear Sirs:

I wished we had made a copy of report to the Corps of Engineers we sent to Omaha District. I sent a letter to Omaha District yesterday. I will try to recall our comments.

1. The major impact is flooding. We must relocate some levees; slow the speed of river to 3 mph from 6-7 mph.
2. Limited access to river.
3. Widen levees and relocate levees would decrease speed of river.
4. Purchase more land by Corps of Engineers would have effect to reduce speed; allow the river to change channels.
5. Bluffs in Doniphan Co, KS are scenic and need to be preserved.
6. Barge traffic has been reduced to o. Used to be lots of barge traffic.
7. Rain has important effect on water too.

Sincerely,

Charlene and George Jorgensen

Please note that George Jorgensen's comments were handwritten and were typed by Chandra Ruthstrom. The original letter is on file at the Center for Engagement and Community Development office at Kansas State University.

Appendix H, continued

Missouri River Focus Group Meeting
Atchison, KS
10-3-09

When I was a small boy after the second World War I used to go with my family to the livestock markets at St. Joseph, Missouri. While traveling through Doniphan County, Kansas, I noticed three things: people living on the land "many small farms;" diverse production "especially fruits and truck crops," and multiple purveyors of fish from the Missouri River. Although all three may be a part of a comprehensive restoration of our Missouri River Valley and planet, here I shall deal only with riverine produce.

Since Biblical times bountiful fisheries have been tremendous economic generators. As we in stewardship circles have learned by experience, we have come to appreciate the role of predators in an ecosystem, the need for diversity and the effects of climate change. In regards to our (White Mans) treatment of the Missouri River we need to contemplate our actions and their results and learn from our experience, not to repeat ones with negative effects.

My predecessors have lived in the Wolf River Valley since before the Civil War. As livestock agarians we have learned from experience. We have been an OCIA certified organic farm/ranch for over 20 years. We use many types of modern methods and technologies. We just don't use artificial toxic pesticides and fertilizers. We have tried to learn from history and are somewhat selective. Perhaps it would behoove us to treat our river in a similar manner. Learn from experience what's done is done, but we need not to go forward, further in the wrong direction.

We have neighbors who use the Missouri River, as a recreation and food resource. Many who eat fish from the Missouri River have died, apparently prematurely from cancer and other such ailments. There has also been a decline in quantity of some useful species such as catfish, sturgeon and waterfowl. It is asking to much to demand riverine produce that is not poison or rendered extinct?

We have a wonderful potentially life giving resource in the Missouri River. We cannot afford further desecration of the River. We are all in the same boat (valley). If we are to sustain ourselves we must use dialogue, considerate thought and coercion, "not force," to co-exist. Wholesome and abundant riverine produce will be a boon to all.

In conclusion I feel it would be astute to try and live in harmony (co-exist) with the River. To nourish it, so that it can nourish us. To learn from the experience of the Native Americans.

Jake Geiger
Robinson, Kansas
10-3-09

Please note that Jake Geiger's comments were handwritten and faxed to us. After scanning them in a PDF and also in a Word file, they were too large to send electronically. Therefore, I typed his handwritten comments. The originals are on file in the Center for Engagement and Community Development office at Kansas State University. Thank you.

# Attachment L

## Focal Natural Resources

**Basin-wide list of potential focal natural resources**

1. Cotton woods and bottomland timber
2. Riparian willow
3. Native medicinal plants
4. Traditional food plants, including Juneberries, choke cherries, other berry bushes
5. Native bottomland plants and prairie including, gooseberries, paw paws, butterfly milkweeds
6. Fish and wildlife
7. All threatened and endangered species
8. Waterbirds, herons, egrets
9. Waterfowl
10. Wild turkey
11. Deer
12. Wetland habitats
13. Floodplain prairies
14. River otter, beaver, mink, muskrat
15. Big bass, walleye
16. Native Mussels and mollusks
17. Sand (loss of it in lower basin)
18. Fertile soil
19. Snags, Sand bars, Meanders, Backwater channels or side channels
20. Water quality
21. Barrier islands in the south Mississippi
22. Invasive, including Zebra mussel, Eurasian millefoile, wild parsnips, salt cedar
23. Invertebrate life