

# Missouri River Futures

## Quarterly Activities Report for 03/07 through 06/07 –

Submitted by Theresa Smydra

- 1) I'm getting there! I'm getting a very good feel as to the complexity of issues that are in this stretch of the river and how unique and special the Missouri National Recreational River is. I'm also getting more comfortable working with landowners with interests across the board. I've said this before but I'm seeing many retired, elderly landowners whose land will likely be changing hands in the near future (0-5 years?) and am fearful there are developers poised to quickly seize these opportunities.
- 2) Attended fewer meetings during Q2 in 2007 learning about current and future activities. These include:
  - a. Yankton Clean-up Meeting – April 11
  - b. Niobrara East & West DOR – May 1
  - c. Elk Point Bend Dedication – May 4
  - d. T & E Training – May 23
  - e. ESH Boat Trip & Niobrara meeting – June 5 & 6
  - f. Sediment Study Workshop & Public Meeting – June 14
  - g. NPABC steering committee meeting
- 3) Working closely with USACE on the ESH projects and landowners associated with rights-of-entry, staging areas, and lease offers. This included several field visits and follow-up.
- 4) Have been assisting with the cottonwood research studies with USD Mark Dixon. Assisted by researching and conducting some of the landowner contacts I have been working with and learning new ones with Mark's help.
- 5) Made approximately 60 landowner contacts associated with 26 different properties. This includes 28 contacts with 15 new landowners this quarter. All together these parcels represent 32.7 miles of river bank and 12,325 acres. In addition to the contacts were various research and follow-up activities for a number of reasons. Following are some of the major events including ones mentioned earlier:
  - a. 550 acres near Vermillion, SD. 1 1/3 mile of river frontage. I've spent a great deal of time preparing an alternate presentation in the event they do not accept the USACE fee title offer. This was done by working closely with landscape architect Gary Wells and several others. This involved considerable research and coordination, field visits, teleconferences, etc. I'm working closely with USACE on this.
  - b. 2500 acres near Wynot, NE. ROE and Staging, processing involving an impending fee-title offer from USACE.
- 6) Worked closely with the SD NRCS, FSA, and Conservation Districts to obtain the latest landowner updates and obtain some times crucial inside information. It also

helps keep MRF in the back of their minds when speaking with landowners. They have also been key in helping me put together information and assisting with making the initial contact with these landowners.

- 7) Maintaining contact with Randall and Lower James RC&D with their 319 funding for the Lewis & Clark Sedimentation project.
- 8) I've started tailoring the toolbox for what I view as 4 different segments that the programs offered apply to. We have the 39-mile SD and NE side, and the 59-mile SD & NE side. I have gotten positive feedback from the one I have completed so far, saying it was easier to decipher and pick out applicable programs.
- 9) Starting to put website together with Tim Cowman. This will be given higher priority next quarter.
- 10) Maintain close contact with partners and monitor current needs for MRF activities on the MNRR. Spend considerable time corresponding through email, phone calls and visits at meetings. Updated landowner information sheets and submitting program interest information to proper agency.
- 11) I continue spend time keeping up to date with NRCS programs as I feel these are a key part of the 'toolbox options' I discuss with landowners. This includes info on program administration changes, CRP, weed management, & staff meetings.
- 12) The WRP program administered by NRCS has sparked a lot of interest in both the Niobrara and Missouri floodplain. Steve has spent a significant amount of time administering this program in Knox and Cedar County NE. Nearly 2000 acres of floodplain property has potential of enrollment into a perpetual conservation easement.