



Missouri River Futures
P.O. Box 46
102 E Elm St.
Hartington, NE 68739
402-254-6858 ext. 114

MISSOURI RIVER FUTURES
Full-Group Meeting
November 7, 2007
Ponca State Park Visitors Center

The annual full-group meeting organized by the Missouri River Futures was held in the Ponca State Park Visitors Center on November 7, 2007. The meeting was held to share information amongst the many federal, state, local, and private organizations along the Missouri National Recreational River (MNRR).

The meeting began a little after 10 a.m. with Theresa Smydra, Missouri River Futures (MRF) Coordinator, giving a summary of her activities during her first year with MRF. To tie in with her presentation, Tim Cowman, new director of the Missouri River Institute, gave a brief overview on how the new MRF website will be organized and what information will be available. Tim is providing this valuable service as an in-kind service to MRF. Gary Wells, landscape architect with NRCS, then gave an overview of the project that MRF, several other agency personnel and he worked on early in 2007 to conduct a resource assessment on a parcel of land along the MNRR to determine best possible uses for easement and other resource efforts. Galen Jons, natural resources biologist with the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), then spoke about the rationale behind constructing emergent sandbar habitats and summarized past, present and future projects. Dustin Everitt, fisheries biologist with the NG&PC, then gave a presentation on the spawning behaviors of pallid sturgeon in their study reach on the channelized section of the Missouri. Of note, was one documented spawning event in the MNRR reach upstream of Ponca. Sam Stukel, fisheries biologist with the South Dakota Game, Fish, and Parks Department, gave an entertaining synopsis of their river research activities on the reach below Gavins Point Dam.

The meeting then broke for lunch which was catered in by Oscars, the new restaurant in Ponca. After a short lunch break, Tim Cowman began the afternoon session by presenting information on the Missouri River Institute. Mark Dixon, assistant professor at the University of South Dakota, then spoke about his cottonwood research efforts funded by the USACE with his graduate students on the MNRR. An update on the Missouri River Recovery Implementation Committee was then given by Michael Eng, senior program manager for the US Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution. We were fortunate to be able to get Mike here from his base in Arizona due to public hearings being held in Omaha, Nebraska the following day. Spurred by questions, Becky Latka gave a synopsis of the USACE Recovery program on the MNRR stretch below Gavins Point Dam.

Theresa wrapped up the meeting by noting that today's presentations, toolboxes (multi-agency conservation programs list), quarterly reports, and meeting minutes will soon be posted on the MRF website and will be the site to use in the future to access this information and she will

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notify the group when that was up and running. Newsletter was also slated to be completed around the end of November.

She also noted material available on the table which included:

- 1) Copies of the four MRF toolbox versions
- 2) USACE estates
- 3) Summary and contact information for the Missouri River Bank Stabilization Association (MRBSA)
- 4) Progress report and brochure for the Lewis & Clark Watershed Implementation Project
- 5) Note from John Davidson on the Northern Prairies Land Trust, Nebraska Natural Legacy Project, and the Northern Prairies' Big Sioux River Watershed Protection Project
- 6) Brochure by The Nature Conservancy highlighting a conservation action plan for the Lower Missouri River Ecosystem.

Theresa offered to hear any suggestions for future MRF activities and called for any additional partners willing to help fund MRF activities and serve on the MRF steering committee. Ponca State Park voluntarily hosted the meeting and their hospitality was appreciated.

Attendance varied throughout the day but approximately 40 people attended representing 22 different entities.