



Missouri River Futures  
P.O. Box 46  
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## MISSOURI RIVER FUTURES Full-Group Meeting Minutes

December 10, 2008  
Ponca State Park Visitor Center

The meeting convened at 10 a.m. on a wonderful winter day. Theresa kicked off the presentations with her Missouri River Futures updates and brief progress report. Mike Happold (USFWS) gave a detailed overview of the Wetland Reserve Program which out-lined program procedures and current status on current & pending projects. Theresa followed Mike with the exciting news of the Wetland Reserve Enhancement Program (WREP) newly authorized for the MNRR in Nebraska. Collectively the promotion is called the Missouri River Corridor Special Initiative (CSI). She outlined briefly the benefits of this program and the eligibility differences between WRP & WREP. Otherwise the programs are identical. She stressed that this was our best opportunity to date to protect and enhance the natural resources along the MNRR and partnership assistance was crucial for its success!

Galen Jons (USACE) gave an overview of past, present, & future emergent sandbar projects and T&E bird use to date. The most productive was the sandbar constructed near Wynot, NE at river mile 791.5. Casey Bergthold (NE G&PC) gave an entertaining presentation on the pallid sturgeon recovery efforts of his team, then provided information as to what Sam Stuckel (SD GF&P) and his pallid research crew were up to on the 59-mile segment.

Gene Zuerlein (NE G&PC) graciously gave two presentations during this meeting. His presentation on tow boat utilization clearly demonstrated how little a part navigation plays in the economic picture of the Missouri River, especially above Kansas, and never was at a level initially predicted.



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Lunch was served to 44 individuals, catered in by Cecelia's, a locally owned business in Ponca. Meanwhile, everyone engaged in interactive conversations and/or viewed the five posters exhibited by NE G&PC and USD graduate students.

Gene Zuerlein gave his second presentation on behalf of MORAST (Missouri River Association of States and Tribes) about the Flood Control Act of 1944 and reasons it should be reviewed. Howard Paul followed with a brief introduction then played a DVD narrated by the late Tony Dean concerning the sedimentation of the reservoir lakes and economic impacts. Next Tim Cowman (MRI) gave a brief update on the water trail development efforts on the MNRR and the very user friendly website under development to help adventurers have an enjoyable trip.

MRBSA president Jim Peterson was next on the agenda. He read aloud the statute mentioning bank stabilization in the 1978 Wild & Scenic Rivers Act Amendment which gave the MNRR its current status. He also wanted the audience to know about the thesis written by Dan Spiegel and other news. New park superintendent Michael Madell spoke of the many recent new changes and those coming next year for the NPS. He gave a brief introduction about himself and their new hydrologist John Macy. He also spoke about the impending consolidation of area NPS offices into a new facility being built in Yankton.

Brief updates of other projects included Scott Wessel talking about NE Legacy efforts, the highly successful Outdoor Expo, and the recent accomplishments of Northeast Nebraska Weed Management Area. Paul Lepisto then briefed the group as to the recent efforts to establish a river festival based near Yankton geared toward students in grades 7 and up to be conducted May 8, the day prior to the 2009 annual river cleanup.

According to the signup sheet, there were 52 in attendance representing 28 different agencies/organizations. This was the best attendance to date for this meeting which is in its 4<sup>th</sup> year.

Many thanks to those who support Missouri River Futures.