

# Upper Mississippi River Conservation Committee

## Recreation Technical Section Spring 2007 Meeting Minutes

Prairie Island Resort and Casino  
Bonaire Room  
March 20, 2007  
1:00 to 4:30 pm

1. **Welcome and Introductions** – We had 15 representatives from 4 States, 2 Corps Districts, 2 Refuge Districts, Refuge HQs and 1 NGO at the technical section meeting. The number of participants was up compared to last years annual meeting. See the attached list for names of participants.
2. **Update on the Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) – Cindy Samples, USFWS – Refuge HQs** – Implementation of the CCP will include an update/replacement of all informational signs and maps at kiosks and other contact points. New beach signs will be blue and white. Hunting brochures will be updated incrementally as new regulations come on line. Step down plans include establishing new no-wake zones and no-wake areas in cooperation with local units of government. More to come as step down planning continues.
3. **FWWG White Paper on Recreational Boating Impacts – Tim Yager, USFWS and Scot Johnson, MDNR** – The draft white paper was distributed and discussed by the group. The white paper pulls together and summarizes what is known about the impacts of recreational boats on water quality, shoreline erosion, vegetation, and fish and wildlife habitat. The Tec Section will follow the progress of the white paper as it moves through the FWWG and RRF review and endorsement process.
4. **Cultural Resources Awareness – Brad Perkl, Corps St. Paul District** – Brad provided an excellent overview presentation of the cultural resources along the Mississippi River emphasizing the importance of site integrity for scientific interpretation of cultural artifacts. Corps studies show up to 150 feet of shoreline erosion over the last 70 years at some of the 20 most threatened cultural sites. As discussion progressed it became quite apparent that there was a great deal of common interest between the cultural resource participants and the recreational management participants. Additional coordination and cooperation is anticipated in the near future.
5. **Beach Planning – Lisa Lund, Kevin Berg, Corps St. Paul District** – An introduction by Kevin on the history of beach planning in the St. Paul District and

a PowerPoint presentation by Lisa regarding some recent work in Pool 9 illustrated the beach planning activities in the District. Basically the St. Paul District is looking at maintaining some of the historic beaches through vegetation control, grading and limited O&M sand placement. Beach planning/activities had been on hold until finalization of the CCP. A recently formed group, Friends of Pool 9, has been instrumental in coordination and promotion of the beach improvement activities.

- 6. Friends of Pool 9's Leave No Trace – Tim Yager, USFWS McGregor District**  
– A new effort spun from the CCP public participation meetings is set to establish a first ever “Leave No Trace” program on the Upper Mississippi River. Lead by Tim Loose, USFWS Refuge, and the Lansing, IA Friends of Pool 9, this effort will include new signs, brochures, garbage bags, fire rings and special events starting this summer.
- 7. Upper Mississippi River Recreation web page – Barry Drazkowski, St. Mary University**  
– Barry hooked his computer to the internet to demonstrate the web mapping page developed by St. Mary's for the River Resources Forum's Recreation Work Group. The web-mapping page includes all sorts of information regarding the aerial boat surveys conducted biannually since 1989 for Pools 1 – 10. The web page includes pdf files of past reports, hot links to air photos during the most recent fly over, beach and active boat use by zone, various overlay map themes for interpretation and context as well as the ability to query the data base for trends. The web page address is:  
<http://maps.geospatialservices.org/missboatserver/index.html>
- 8. Asian Carp and Recreation – Scot Johnson, MDNR**  
– Scot presented a PowerPoint presentation first put together by Steve Delain, MN – LTRMP in cooperation with Kevin Irons, IL-LTRMP, on Asian Carp entitled “North Bound Asian Carp”. It illustrated the real potential for Asian Carp, particularly Silver Carp, to negatively impact the recreational activities occurring in the upper pools.
- 9. Coordinator's Report – Scott Yess**  
– Scott provided a very nice summary of the UMRCC activities over the past year.

#### **10. Additional Points of Discussion**

**Geocaching** – Is becoming a big issue on the Refuge where it is not allowed. USFWS is looking at developing a virtual geocaching program to accommodate peoples desire to hike the refuge lead by GPS coordinates without the potential disturbance of creating a cache for trinkets. St. Marys is doing something similar for a client.

**Wake Boarding Boats** – Manufactures are designing boats capable of generating large, custom made waves for wake boarding enthusiasts.

**RAMSAR** – we discussed the proposed international wetland designation. While we did not have time to have an exhaustive discussion, no participants objected to the designation for the Upper Mississippi River.

**2007 Fall Meeting** – We hope to have a joint meeting with Wildlife and Fish some place in Illinois in September. More details will be coming out this summer. Potential follow-up agenda items include:

1. Update - FWVG White Paper and the RRF endorsement process to determine if the UMRCC Recreation Technical Section needs to take a role.
2. Training - Cultural resources awareness field trip and discussion.
3. Lessons Learned - Pool 9 “Leave No Trace” implementation.
4. Asian Carp – invite Illinois staff already having to deal with recreational impact issues near Peoria on the Illinois River for a presentation and to lead discussion.
5. What’s New? - Report on what is new in water recreation including more on wake boats, jet skis, and other new fangled contraptions.
6. Other ideas and interests – we need to hear your thoughts!

#### UMRCC Recreation Technical Section – 2007 Annual Meeting Participants

Kevin Berg, COE, St. Paul  
Barry Drazkowski, SMU  
Francis Walton, COE, St. Louis  
Lisa Lund, COE, St. Paul  
Cindy Samples, USFWS, Upper Miss.  
Tim, Yager, USFWS, Upper Miss.  
Brad Perkl, COE, St. Paul  
Jim Fischer, WDNR  
Janet Sternburg, MDC  
Ken Barr, COE, Rock Island  
Cindy Wheeler, MNDNR  
Ed Britton, USFWS  
Scot Johnson, MNDNR  
Martin Konrad, IADNR  
Scott Yess, UMRCC Coordinator