

UMRCC  
1988



the  
**UMRCC**  
 news letter \*

November/December 1988

**CHAIRMAN'S LETTER**

At the Executive Board meeting in October, we hopefully set in motion action that will lead to resolution of concerns regarding assessment of EMP Habitat Rehabilitation and Enhancement Projects. If so, then we will be able to bring about what the EMP Coordinating Committee would or could not. We greatly appreciate Joe Scott's timely affirmative response to our plea for help on this matter.

It's time already to make plans to attend the 45th UMRCC Annual Meeting to be held March 7-9, 1989, at Wisconsin Dells. Registration information is enclosed (p.8). The large number of attendees at our meetings the past few years makes early registration even more important. Also, note the newly reinitiated UMRCC Conservation Awards Program on page 9. Nominations are due by January 30, 1989. Please give it serious consideration.

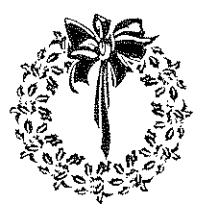
Greenpeace apparently took umbrage at our comments on their visit to the UMR, but their letter to the UMRCC indicates they missed the point (p.12). Several Greenpeace accomplishments are listed, but as far as I am aware no attempts have been made to coordinate work on these items. To ignore the efforts of other organizations or agencies is to belittle those efforts, when in fact the work of these organizations and agencies has been and will continue to be far more crucial to the environmental health of the Mississippi than anything Greenpeace will achieve. However, we remain open to actively coordinating with Greenpeace and all environmental organizations dedicated to protecting and preserving the natural and recreational resources of the Upper Mississippi River.

*Bill A. Bertrand*

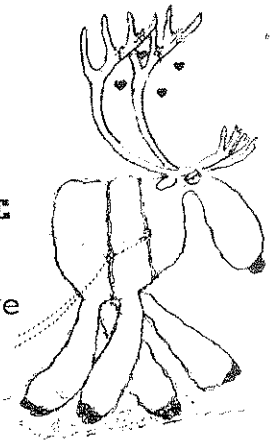
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\* This Newsletter is a publication of the Upper Mississippi River Conservation Committee. Suggestions or comments regarding its content should be directed to the Chairman, 1830 Second Avenue, Rock Island, Illinois 61201.



## WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING IN THE UMRCC?



This summer and fall all the UMRCC Sections and the Executive Board met. We think you should know what everyone has been doing. The following is excerpted from the Executive Board minutes.

EXECUTIVE BOARD. The UMRCC Executive Board met on October 25 in Rock Island, Illinois. Two major actions were taken by the Board. First, the Board recommended that the Chairman request that the Long Term Resource Monitoring Program (LTRMP) assist each of the Habitat Rehabilitation and Enhancement Project (HREP) sponsors in designing and standardizing their monitoring of HREP projects. This resulting letter and affirmative reply are included at the back of this Newsletter.

The other major action taken by the Executive Board was to recommend that the Environmental Management Program (EMP) be the primary topic of the 1989 Annual Meeting. Emphasis will be on designing and monitoring HREP projects. The Corps' Office of the Chief of Engineers in Washington, D.C. has been requested to provide the keynote address. See the registration form at the end of this Newsletter for more information.

RECREATION SECTION. Jake VanderVoort reported that the Recreation and Water Use Section met in July at Wapello, Iowa. A potential canoe trail in Pool 18 was explored. At their business meeting, the Environmental Management Program (EMP) Impacts of Recreation Economics Study was discussed. Since the section meeting, a contract has been let with the Corps' Waterways Experiment Station to design the survey instruments. Many UMRCC members have participated in meetings to assist the contractors. Powell noted that the State law enforcement personnel may be able to provide assistance when the surveys are conducted.

VanderVoort also displayed some potential canoe route signs. The Section hopes to have draft guidelines for selection and signage of canoe routes completed by the spring meeting. Fernholz asked what the Section would be doing with the completed recreational use surveys done in Pools 5a and 24. VanderVoort will contact Gordon Farabee and Ron Benjamin on the reports so they can be reviewed and approved for publication at the spring meeting. Finally, there was some discussion on the marina expansion in the upper pools. No recommendations for coordination were made.

WILDLIFE SECTION. Troy LaRue reported that the Wildlife Section met September 21-22 at Itasca State Park, the headwaters of the Mississippi River. The Section toured several wetland and prairie management areas including Tamarac National Wildlife Refuge. At their business meeting, a number of issues were discussed. An improved and standardized waterfowl census scheme specific to the UMR was discussed. There will be additional

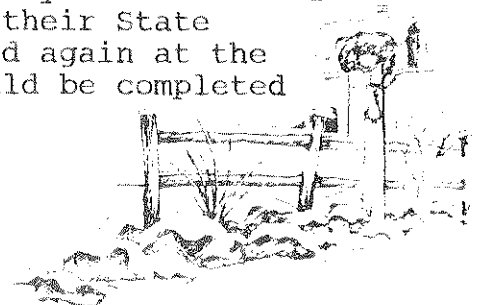
follow-up with the Illinois Natural History Survey. The Section's giant Canada goose survey was discussed. It was agreed to make this an annual report.

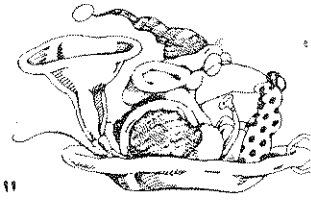
Section input to the EMP Long Term Resource Monitoring Program (LTRMP) computerized information system was discussed as was the North American Waterfowl Management Plan and the botulism die-offs that had occurred over the summer. The need for increased EMP funding was discussed. It was agreed that the Section would prepare an information paper on the EMP and the FY90 budget. The papers will be used by members to better inform the public about the EMP and to solicit public support for the EMP. The possibility of seeking federal funds for a non-game survey was discussed. It was concluded that special funding was not necessary, but that there was a need to update the UMRCC heron rookery survey. A survey will be sent to members this winter and compiled for the spring meeting. Monitoring of Habitat Rehabilitation and Enhancement Projects (HREP) was discussed including the need for a standardized set of procedures.

LAW ENFORCEMENT SECTION. The Law Enforcement Section chairman, Richard Powell, reported that the section met in September at the Western Illinois University Kibbe Research Center near Hamilton, Illinois. Only members from Illinois, Missouri, and Minnesota were represented. Boating accidents and fatalities were discussed. Concern was expressed over the need for the State line to be designated at each of the dams. Some coordination on having markers installed was done in the late 1970's, but nothing was implemented. The Coordinator is following-up on this. The majority of the meeting was spent discussing waterfowl enforcement techniques including the use of video and metal detectors.

FISHERIES SECTION. Dan Sallee reported for the Fisheries (Water Quality) Section. The large group met also at Kibbe Research Center. Fishing tournament regulation was discussed. The chairman will be compiling a list of procedures each of the States use for discussion at the spring meeting. Evaluation of HREP projects was discussed including the need for pre-construction data and the need for all the project sponsors to collect data in a similar manner. The Fisheries Section agreed that a one page public information paper would help to generate public awareness and support for the program. Several members were appointed to help the Wildlife Section in this regard.

The status of the LTRMP was discussed including the need for input on what data sets should be included in the computer inventory. A short video of the National Recreational Fisheries Policy was presented. It was decided that the only action needed at this time is for each State to find out what their State position is on this policy. It will be discussed again at the spring meeting. The Mussel Strategy Report should be completed by this spring.





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Regarding new regulations: 1) Wisconsin is proposing a 14" largemouth/smallmouth bass length limit and a 15" walleye length limit effective 1/1/90, 2) Wisconsin is proposing increasing the length limit of washboards from 3.5" to 4.0" and shortening the harvest season by one month to reduce washboard harvest by 60%, 3) Illinois was successful at establishing several mussel sanctuaries, 4) Illinois is pursuing a separate license for mussel fishermen, and 5) Iowa fishing tournament regulations will go into effect for the 1989 season. Finally the Section recommended that the UMRCC awards program be re-established to recognize deserving members. The Board concurred with this recommendation. The Coordinator has redrafted the awards criteria and procedures for implementation at the next annual meeting. See nomination form at the end of this Newsletter.

AD HOC WATER QUALITY. Dan Sallee also reported for the water quality ad hoc committee which had 15 members in attendance. The group agreed to establish a small work group to address sediment quality field sampling procedures, laboratory quality assurance and control, development of background levels and other related sediment issues. An overview of U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 5 sediment program was given. In addition, the St. Paul District work on bioassay procedures was discussed. A methods manual is due out soon. The St. Paul District has also developed a sediment quality data base which will be available soon. This work spurred discussion on how and where sediment quality and contaminant data should be stored. It was recommended that the LTRMP establish this data base. A work group was formed to identify criteria and format for the data.

COORDINATOR'S REPORT. The Coordinator, Gail Carmody, reported that each of the Sections have approved the prototype traveling display. To date no new photos have been submitted, so two additional identical displays with hard cases will be ordered. It was noted that the display materials are flexible and that each Section could tailor-make a display to fit their needs. In addition, specific information sheets can be developed. Under a contract with the LTRMP, the UMRCC library is getting computerized and should be more useable by the members. The contract is being done to complete an initial data set inventory and bibliography for LTRMP. Carmody reminded the Board that they needed to ensure that the UMRCC was on the State lists to receive publications dealing with the River. In addition, members need to submit all published articles for inclusion in the library.

A survey of ongoing research and data collection on the River was completed in July. The Wildlife and Fisheries Sections would like to see this survey completed annually. The draft membership list should go out next month to be updated to member agencies and cooperators. The 43rd Annual Meeting Proceedings were distributed in July. The 44th Annual Meeting Proceedings are nearing the final stages of completion and should be available in the next few months.

The results of the survey on the use of the proceedings were handed out. Basically, the proceedings are getting a high amount of use by our members. The format seems to be acceptable to the majority of members. We could make the proceedings more useable if they were indexed. This should be easily accomplished when the library is computerized. In response to questions concerning making copies of presentations available at the time of the annual meeting, 77% responded that they could comply. Finally, the members expressed some interest in a journal dedicated to the Upper Mississippi River, but did not want a journal in lieu of annual meeting proceedings. After some discussion, the Executive Board agreed 1) that the format for the proceedings should remain unchanged, 2) each presenter will be given a set of guidelines and requested to provide a copy of their presentation at the time of the annual meeting, and 3) that the Mississippi River Research Consortium will be advised of the results of the survey on the journal.

\* Reprinting of the booklet on the mussels of the River was discussed. The Coordinator reported that the previous supply has been exhausted and that there was a demand for about 2500 additional copies. The St. Louis District, Fish and Wildlife Service, Illinois, and Missouri have indicated an interest in providing funds to reprint the booklet. Wisconsin is willing to handle the print purchase order. The Board directed the Coordinator to send a letter to each of the member agencies and cooperators asking if they would like to purchase additional copies. The UMRCC will collect the funds and coordinate with Wisconsin to see that the booklets are reprinted.

The completion of pool maps by the UMRCC was discussed. Minnesota completed a pocket map last year with boating safety monies. Iowa is doing likewise and will have individual pool maps available within the next year. This makes maps available through Pool 19. Missouri and Illinois have not expressed an interest in completing maps for the remainder of the upper river. The St. Louis District may be completing maps for pools 25 and 26. The Board concluded that the UMRCC does not have sufficient funds to complete these maps so it will be removed as a budget item.

### DID YOU KNOW THAT? . . .

...President-elect Bush is an avid fisherman. We wonder if his enthusiasm for fishing will result in a change on how recreation and recreation projects are viewed in implementation of the UMR Environmental Management Program...

...Oklahoma biologists have found that saugeye usually feed in shallow water and prefer shoreline habitat. The saugeye tend to congregate on windy shores and prefer low light conditions...



...The legislative amendment seeking to clarify the operation and maintenance responsibility for Habitat Rehabilitation and Enhancement Projects failed due to strong opposition from the Reagan Administration...



...Rehabilitation of Lock 4 necessitated closure of the lock on November 30. It will be closed until resumption of the navigation season next spring. Locks 21 and 22 also will be closed for rehabilitation from January 2 - March 3, 1989...

...The Wilderness Society has listed the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge as one of the top ten endangered National Wildlife Refuges. It was included due to threats from sedimentation, contaminants, inappropriate public uses, and increasing boating facilities. The Society has recommended that Corps lands now part of the refuge be transferred to the Fish and Wildlife Service and that the staff of the refuge be increased...

...Low water conditions below St. Louis have resulted in the need to remove rocky areas near Thebes and Grand Tower, Illinois to provide for sufficient water depths for navigation. Estimated cost is \$13 million (USA Today 11/3/88)...

...Several States are suing the Corps on their new dredging regulations. The States contend that federal law requires the Corps to comply with State environmental laws, but the new regs give the Corps discretion in this regard. An injunction against implementation is sought (Star Tribune 10/26/88)...

...Goodhue County, Minnesota has established a no wake zone on the River for several miles adjacent to Red Wing. The primary purpose of the no wake zone is to slow down large pleasure craft (Red Wing - Republican Eagle 9/21/88)...

...Coordination is underway with the St. Louis District to implement several of the measures to avoid and minimize effects of tow traffic. UMRCC members are anxiously awaiting similar coordination by the Rock Island and St. Paul Districts...

...In September the Missouri Department of Conservation released 9,500 8 to 10 inch lake sturgeon into Pool 24...

... U.S. EPA is initiating a field investigation of the Onalaska, Wisconsin superfund site. Concern has been expressed that contaminants from the site may have entered the River and have affected the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge...

## MEETINGS OF INTEREST

UMRCC ANNUAL MEETING. March 7-9, 1989, Holiday Inn, Wisconsin Dells, WI. See registration form in this Newsletter.