

Wisconsin Conservation Congress

Mississippi River Committee

Meeting Minutes



ORDER OF BUSINESS	08/20/16	09:30:00 AM	Stoddard Legion, Stoddard, WI
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I. ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

A. CALL TO ORDER

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER BY	Co-Chairman Marc Schultz at 9:30 AM
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B. ROLL CALL

ATTENDEES	Wes Domine, Daniel Heidel, Mike Britton, Hugh Hatch, Lauren Smith, Maurice Amundson, Wayne Stietz, William Howe, Douglas Ide, WI DNR Liaison Bob Jumbeck, WI DNR Biologist Dave Heath, USFW Upper Mississippi Complex Manager Sabrina Chandler
EXCUSED	Richard Wayne, David Lapine, William Kehoe, Tara Rueth
UNEXCUSED	
GUESTS	WI DNR Liason Warden Bob Jumbeck, WI DNR Biologist Dave Heath, USFW Upper Mississippi Complex Manager Sabrina Chandler

C. AGENDA APPROVAL/REPAIR

DISCUSSION	Co-chair Marc Schultz “simplification of rules discussion”
ACTION	Co-chair Mike Britton moved to approve 2nd by Dan Heidel Approved unanimously

D. REVIEW COMMITTEE MISSION STATEMENT

DISCUSSION	co-chair Mike Britton reads Mission Statement No discussion approved as read
ACTION	Motion to ratify made by Wes Domine Seconded by Wayne Stietz Unanimously approved

E. PUBLIC COMMENTS

DISCUSSION	
ACTION	

II. INFORMATION & ACTION ITEMS

Citizen resolution spring walleye fishing season ([470116](#))

JERRY BUCHOLZ
AUTHOR (DURAND)

DISCUSSION	<p>Jerry Bucholz “Walleyes don’t grow like they used to due to technology, many more walleye fishermen, (would like it on sauger but will address that later) Lakes have it as does Minnesota.</p> <p>Bill Howe “What is the Minnesota rule? Should we be following Minnesota rules?”</p> <p>Jerry, “It used to be such that fishing for walleye was February on. Now it is all year long.” The fish aren’t there.”</p> <p>Wes Domine “How did you arrive at the size limits? I’d like to see it done differently. What does our biologist</p>
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say?"

Jerry, "I figure that size fish are sustainable, you get one trophy, better eaters, and superior spawning fish"
Wi DNR Fisheries Biologist Dave Heath, provided a handout with walleye research; lot of factors related to reproduction including climate and fishing; best year ever after huge 2000 flood; no long term trend; watching walleye tournaments for trends- they appear to be steady catch rates on the walleye tournaments; the river has a 15" size restriction; other rivers instate 18" lower limits Allows more chances for fish to spawn

Douglas Ide - says he guides lots of walleye fishermen, not uncommon to get 100 a walleyes in the morning; maybe only two or three keepers except on trophy lakes like Delevan

He is in favor of slot; pulling them off their spawning beds interrupts - huge fan of 3 fish and 18" Maybe implement a buffer zone Enforcement is huge

Wes - lots of comments on this resolution; evidence or not; this is a resolution, and the citizens need to vote on this

Wes Domine moves to offer the resolution

Maurice Amundson Seconds motion

More discussion;

Dan Heidel: Discussion of clarification of limits and lengths

Dave Heath shares variety of limits around state

Will Netzer has never caught a 25 incher, but he is an occasional walleye fisherman

Wes Amundson - describes process for advancement of resolution (after discussions will probably come differently)

Marc Schultz- this would be for the entire river, not just a local issue

Dave Heath - there is a slot in Iowa, not strong evidence that it worked

Marc Schultz- we try to have identical regulations with MN and IA were cool, but with different regs, like with the bluegills it is more complex than just one pool or area

Vote in favor of advancing resolution (470116) unanimous

Bill Howe PDC - Could DNR people use their insights on walleyes on habitats?

What can we do to create quality walleye habitat? Grass areas appear to have changed in last 6 years

Dave Heath - walleyes spawn on rock; there is more grass in the pools

Marc Schultz explains what happens next - Executive council in January to approve questions, "Mostly when a committee advances a resolution, it makes it to the spring hearings"

Wes Domine - asked for a clarification of 3/18 that is 3 fish over 18" limit (in March thru May), two resolutions

	<p>Wes Domine moves to put a 3/18 on spring hearings Second from Dan Heidel</p> <p>Ted Buchholz - what would it do to the fishery if we went back to a May opening and close it in the spring? Dave Heath - since 1967, it appears that most walleyes are taken in May and June according to creel surveys - but they (creel surveys) are hard to come by on the river</p> <p>Maurice Amundson - universal walleye and sauger?</p> <p>Wes Domine - intent was just walleye</p> <p>Sam Smith- sauger is a different species with different spawning habits</p> <p>Dave Heath - a lot of time, spawner walleyes are the same</p> <p>Unanimous vote to forward 3/18 resolution</p> <p>Marc Shultz comment - the preamble this question will be difficult</p>
ACTION	<p>Wes Domine moves to offer the resolution</p> <p>Maurice Amundson Seconds motion</p> <p>after more discussion listed above the vote in favor of advancing resolution (470116) was unanimous</p> <p>Unanimous vote also to forward 3/18 resolution amendment</p>
PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE

Fish Kills on Mississippi

DAVE HEATH WI DNR BIOLOGIST

DISCUSSION	<p>Department info items and updates - Dave Heath handout - explains recent fish kills theories, high water pattern (beginning 6 years) in summer, dead end slough areas don't get flushed out, sediment on plants reduces oxygen, Mid July Mid august warmest water, lower oxygen content, water is surprisingly clear, effecting rice</p> <p>USFW Sabrina Chandler - rice is being effected, far behind because of high water,</p> <p>Marc Schultz - high water provides lots of nutrients and stuff for plants and fish building up and causing fish kills</p>
ACTION	None
PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE

Wisconsin DNR Reorganization

DAVE HEATH

DISCUSSION	Dave Heath- one more item, department going thru reorganization, no news on that at this time
ACTION	None

PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE

Water Clarity Study

DAVE HEATH

DISCUSSION	<p>DaveHeath tells about study by John G. Mc Dougal ? - a water quality and water clarity study handout: “rooted aquatic vegetation and water clarity have increased significantly” Better water clarity = more native fish, less non-native fish, Turbid water means more non-natives like carp and fewer native fish The increased clarity has reduced carp numbers and is important for fish we like to catch Dan Heidel - are Asian carp closer? Dave Heath - not really, apparently not, with what methods we have to monitor, it appears like they are not expanding here</p>
ACTION	none
PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE

Law Enforcement Update

BOB JUMBECK WI DNR LIASON

DISCUSSION	<p>Bob Jumbeck - staffing - “We actually were fully staffed, except for Trempealeau County that position was lost to promotion, still open, but new warden there this fall”, there still may be another loss to promotion, the department in the hiring process of a new class of officers, new group of investigators, Go Wild system - you are still required to have a paper copy of your fishing license because of multiple state and federal jurisdiction; Dan Heidel - what would have to happen to get a Minnesota warden the ability to check a WI license Bob Jumbeck - probably it will take a nationwide effort; but otherwise it will take awhile; also the app is only for Android phones given to WI wardens, no Iphone app; duck hunting? Sabrina Chandler USFW - You have to have the paper copy of your license, “We don’t have the authority to check Go Wild cards” Fish and Wildlife rep Will Netzer- what about the duck stamp? Bob Jumbeck - State stamp will be printed on a piece a paper and will be listed on your Go Wild card Dan Heidel - if goose license is destroyed, will goose registrations show up on reprint Bob Jumbeck - It might, but I don’t know Marc Schultz - we should research this goose hunt thing; maybe we should get in the minutes to get more publicity on Go Wild licensing and requirements Sabrina Chandler USFW is highly in favor,</p>
ACTION	<p>Maurice Amundson made motion to recommend department get more information about paper license facts on Mississippi River (and all state licenses) Dan Heidel seconded motion Vote unanimous in favor of motion</p>

	Marc Schultz will draft recommendation to the department on Mississippi River paper license issue
PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
Marc Schultz	

Propose Rule Change to Ban Gill Nets on Lake Pepin

DAVE HEATH

DISCUSSION	<p>Dave Heath - closing gill netting on Lake Pepin, working to make it permanent to avoid taking state listed species Hugh Hatch - fish traps were never legalized on Mississippi River (hoop nets) ?</p>	
ACTION	none	
PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE	

Update on public right to step across railroad right of way

SABRINA CHANDLER USFW (ON TRIP WITH STAKEHOLDERS)

DISCUSSION	<p>(Marc Schultz - reorder agenda, update on public right to step across railroad right of way Summarizes history of session so far)</p> <p>USFW Sabrina Chandler - explains her take on the trip; USFW, DNR, Corps, Railroad, state railroad commissioner, Senator Shilling and Rep. Lee Nerison on fact finding tour from north to south. DNR recognized somewhere around 185 sites used by sportsmen to access the river. Group settled on 31 possible sights for new public access across the tracks (cost estimate average \$200,000 or more each) Who pays?</p> <p>Wes Domine- dedicated crossings worst thing that can happen to sportsmen.</p> <p>USFW Sabrina Chandler - if it is not public land to to public land not considered; example: at Alma there is water (ice) to water (ice) for ice fishermen dismissed</p> <p>Bill H - so far no one has gone to court with a trespass ticket; state agencies have not done the research regarding their work to protect their bridges and crossings examples, Bagley, Alma</p> <p>Dan - Heidel called the suggested 31 crossings a carrot on a stick. "If we support the 31 dedicated crossings, we are screwed, we would be setting ourselves up; we should oppose this."</p> <p>Bill Howe - On other side of state, railroads dictating to agriculture crossing. A potato farmer could cross with a tractor, but his family couldn't cross on foot with a pail and shovels.</p> <p>Sam Smith - how is this law enforced?</p> <p>Marc Schultz - up to DA not the sheriff</p> <p>John Ross citizen - commented - the railroad is governed by the department of defense; for years there were no signs along the tracks. Now there are No Trespassing signs all along the tracks.</p>
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	<p>Marc Schultz - Wisconsin does not require posting, Iowa does</p> <p>John Ross - situation in Winona recently; I don't know a single person who doesn't practice railroad safety when crossing the tracks</p> <p>Marc Schultz - petition needed in every sport shop to put pressure on our legislature</p> <p>Dan Heidel - we need to get agencies behind changing this law</p> <p>Sabrina Chandler USFW - we can't interfere with State law</p> <p>Bill Howe - yes they can</p>
ACTION	Petitions across the state to inform and motivate legislature
PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
	III.

US Fish and Wildlife Refuge Report

**SABRINA CHANDLER REFUGE
MANAGER**

DISCUSSION	<p>USFW working on updating legal docs on use of refuges; determine uses compatible - we are not proposing revision or changes of the CCP - Comprehensive Conservation Plan, however, there are requirements of the CCP are supposed to be reevaluated every ten years; what uses, how is it used, check out news releases for changes: some new language mentioned includes hammocking, stand up paddle boarding, snowmobile on ice taken out of navigation to new cd, limits on gathering 2 gallons of a number of products per person per day, collection of aquatic plants should be permitted now as opposed to being just open, firewood collection, special events, waterfowl hunting revised last year and not changed this year; fishing tournaments rules in place since 2006 never really followed up and over last few months we have begun that; commercial issues; sport fishing and guides permitting; fees match national standard and requirements; commercial fishing floats permits fees in refuge (not on channel) from \$100 to 3% or \$500; much more . . .</p> <p>Marc Schultz- side by side comparisons, CD “fairly significant”</p> <p>Sabrina Chandler- we were required to include regional CD because of federal policy</p> <p>Bill How - does this affect backwater eco tours?</p> <p>Sabrina Chandler - yes, they need a permit in backwaters</p> <p>Chris ? - citizen questions of clarification - different licenses for?</p> <p>Dave Heath- on commercial and personal bait harvest - we have been working on it; we have internally potential changes in bait harvest and we are working on changes in commercial bait harvest. Survey today for group -</p> <p>Wes Domine - congress voted on this; questions the purpose of this survey/change suggestions as congress has already spoken loudly</p>
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	<p>Dave Heath - we do look at the congress; “we use that as a starting point”</p> <p>Marc Schultz- leaner tree project report from corp Upper Miss restoration program, environmental leadership; corp measured and photographed of leaner trees evaluation</p> <p>Wes Domine- questions why it is so hard to get agencies to come together on positive or needed conservation programs</p> <p>Marc Schultz- lots of hoops</p> <p>Sabrina Chandler - if I hire someone even for two weeks, I have to train them . . .</p> <p>Bill - 8000% increase in use on this whole Mississippi River complex; we need to have more conversations on various things related to personal watercraft</p>				
1.	Action - non				
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>2. PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE</th> <th>3. DEADLINE</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		2. PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	3. DEADLINE		
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VI. MEMBERS MATTERS

	<p>Member matters</p> <p>Bill Howe - what is happening with bowfishing at night?</p> <p>Dave Heath- still permitting bowfishing some complaints about boats out at night perfectly legal activity</p> <p>Dan Heidel - today there are five or six other committee meetings today; can we try to restructure how these meetings get set</p> <p>Hugh Hatch - Introduced and welcomed a new Youth member Kylie Tsphunperlin of Elmwood, WI. He also commented that there was no bluegill or crappie bite on Lake Pepin this spring, good perch bite and good sauger bite</p> <p>Maurice Amundson - move up convention date?</p> <p>Mike Britton - We need to have full access on railroad, important</p>
DISCUSSION	
ACTION	none

VII. ADJOURNMENT

MEETING ADJOURNED	12:10:00 PM
SUBMITTED BY	Greg Koelker WCCMRC Secretary
DATE	08/27/16

Tour of Upper Mississippi Restoration Site near Lynxville, WI
 Landing 1: 00 pm

Pool 9 HREP Project Tour from Lynxville

Marc Schultz

Discussion

Members of the committee toured the Harpers Slough HREP habitat project in the Pool 9 waterfowl hunting closed area in Iowa just above LD 9. The tour was conducted by Dave heath and Jeff Janvrin of the DNR river team and Steve Winter USFWS Refuge biologist. The Harpers project is currently under construction and should be completed next year. The 12 Million dollar, 300 acre dredging, island building and wetland enhancement project will improve fish and wildlife habitat particularly for overwintering fish and migrating waterfowl. Just upstream in Wisconsin is the Capoli Slough project which was completed last year. Committee members stopped at newly created islands, dredge areas and wetlands as well as shore protection rip rap for existing islands of the Harpers project. River conditions at the time of the tour were 3 feet above normal river levels with strong current. HREP island wetlands and dredge areas are designed to work with the water and current fluctuations of the River. Pool 9 is 30 miles long and the area from New Albin Iowa to LD 9 at Lynxville contains habitat that provides 10's of thousands of ducks geese and swans critical migration habitat each spring and fall. This project is an excellent example of the Upper Mississippi River Restoration program which is a working partnership of USFWS, COE and the states of WI, MN, IA and IL.

Great tour learned a lot.

Our tour was great and the weather settled down and the rain barely touched us.

Great hot dogs at the Dawg Stop.

There were masses of floating vegetation traveling 6-8 miles an hour flowing by the Lynxville landing.

Beautiful day to be on the river

ACTION

none

Person(s) responsible

Deadline